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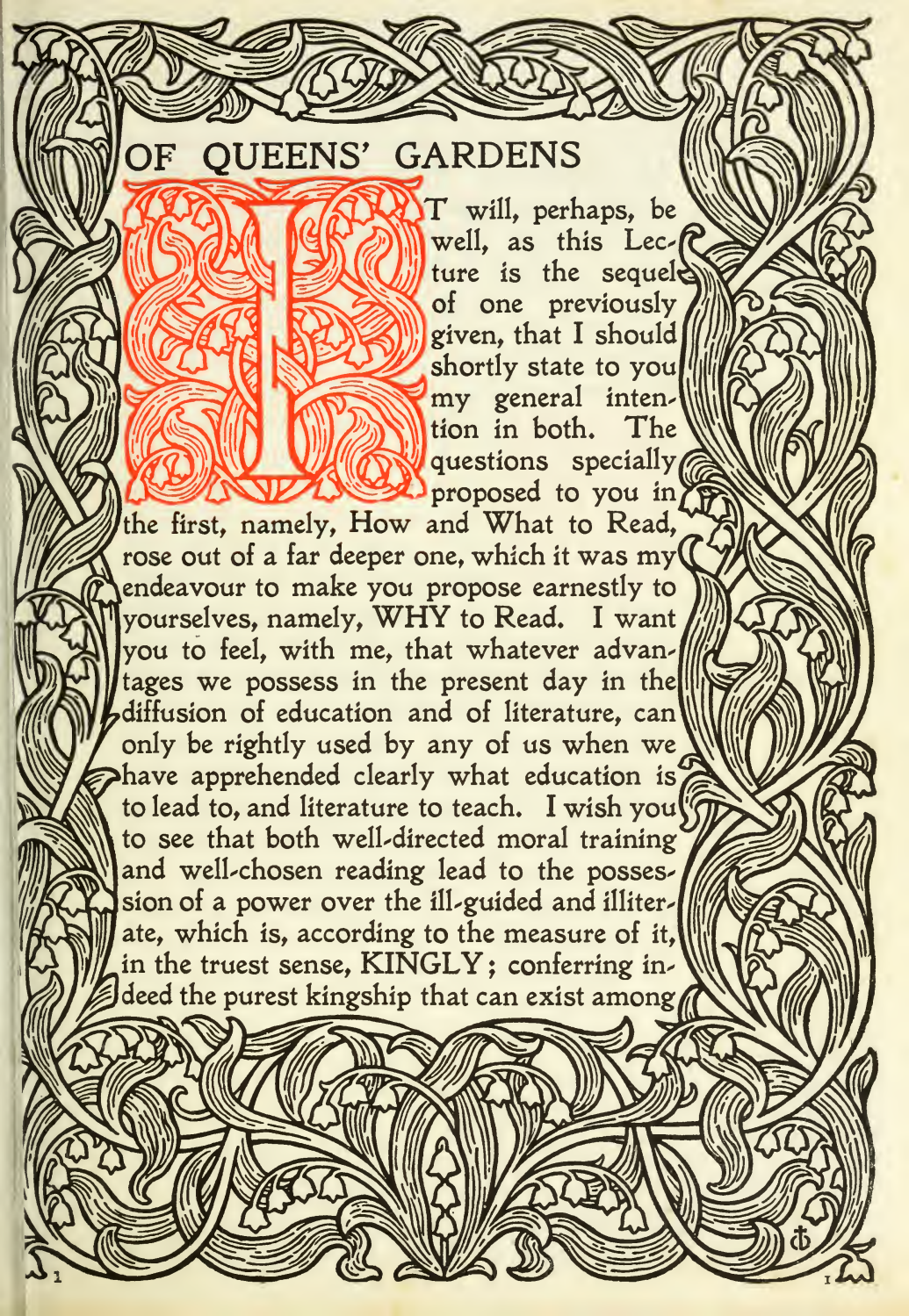
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OF QUEENS' GARDENS.
BY JOHN RUSKIN

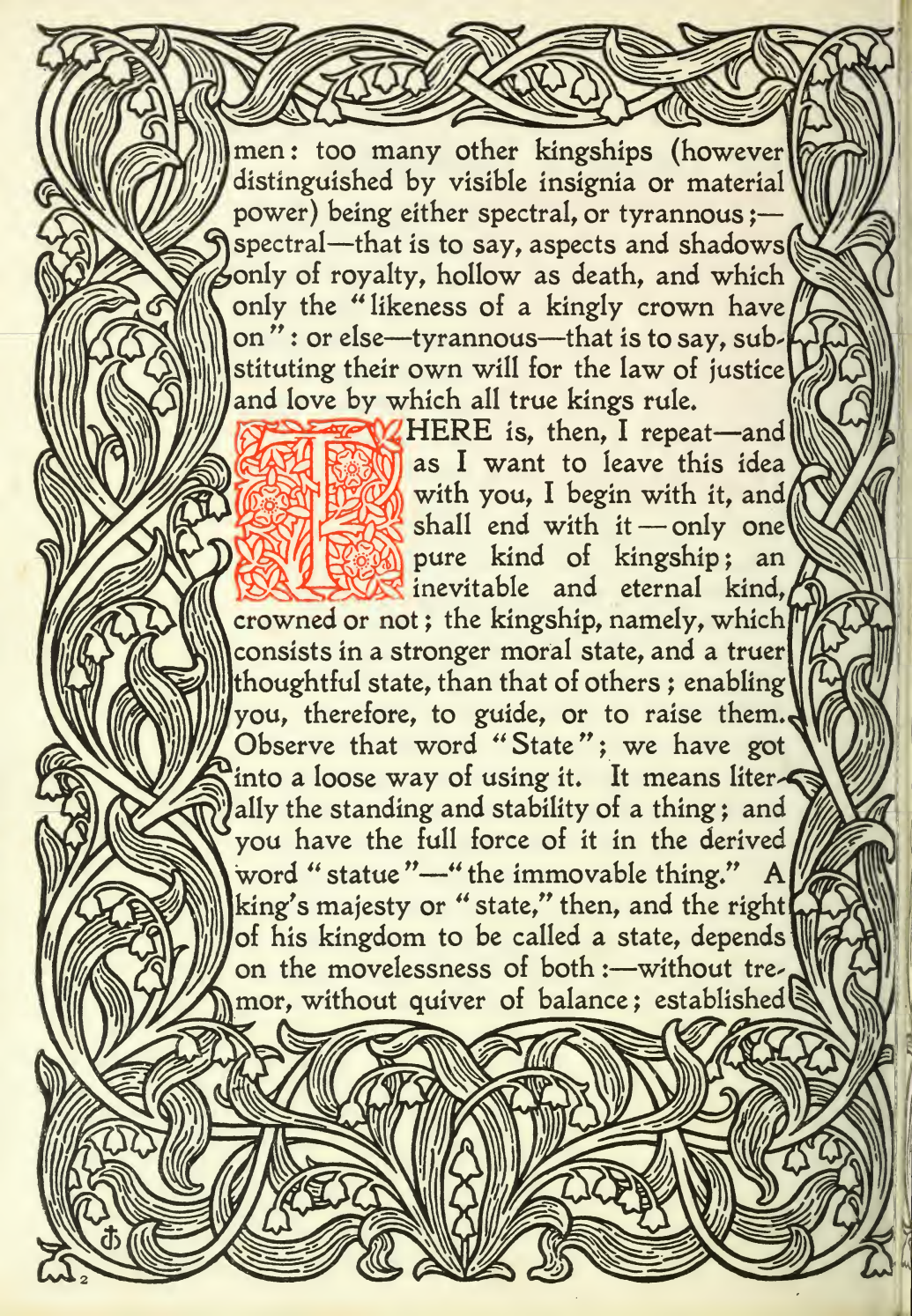
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"BE THOU GLAD, OH THIRSTING
DESERT; LET THE DESERT BE
MADE CHEERFUL, AND BLOOM
AS THE LILY; AND THE BAR-
REN PLACES OF JORDAN SHALL
RUN WILD WITH WOOD."—ISAIAH
XXXV. 1 (SEPTUAGINT) ♪ ♪

A highly detailed decorative border in a black and white Art Nouveau style. It features intricate, flowing lines that form a complex web of stylized leaves, vines, and floral motifs. The design is symmetrical and fills the entire page, framing the central text. The top and bottom borders are particularly dense, with the bottom border featuring a central floral element that resembles a lily or a similar flower. The overall effect is one of elegant, organic complexity.

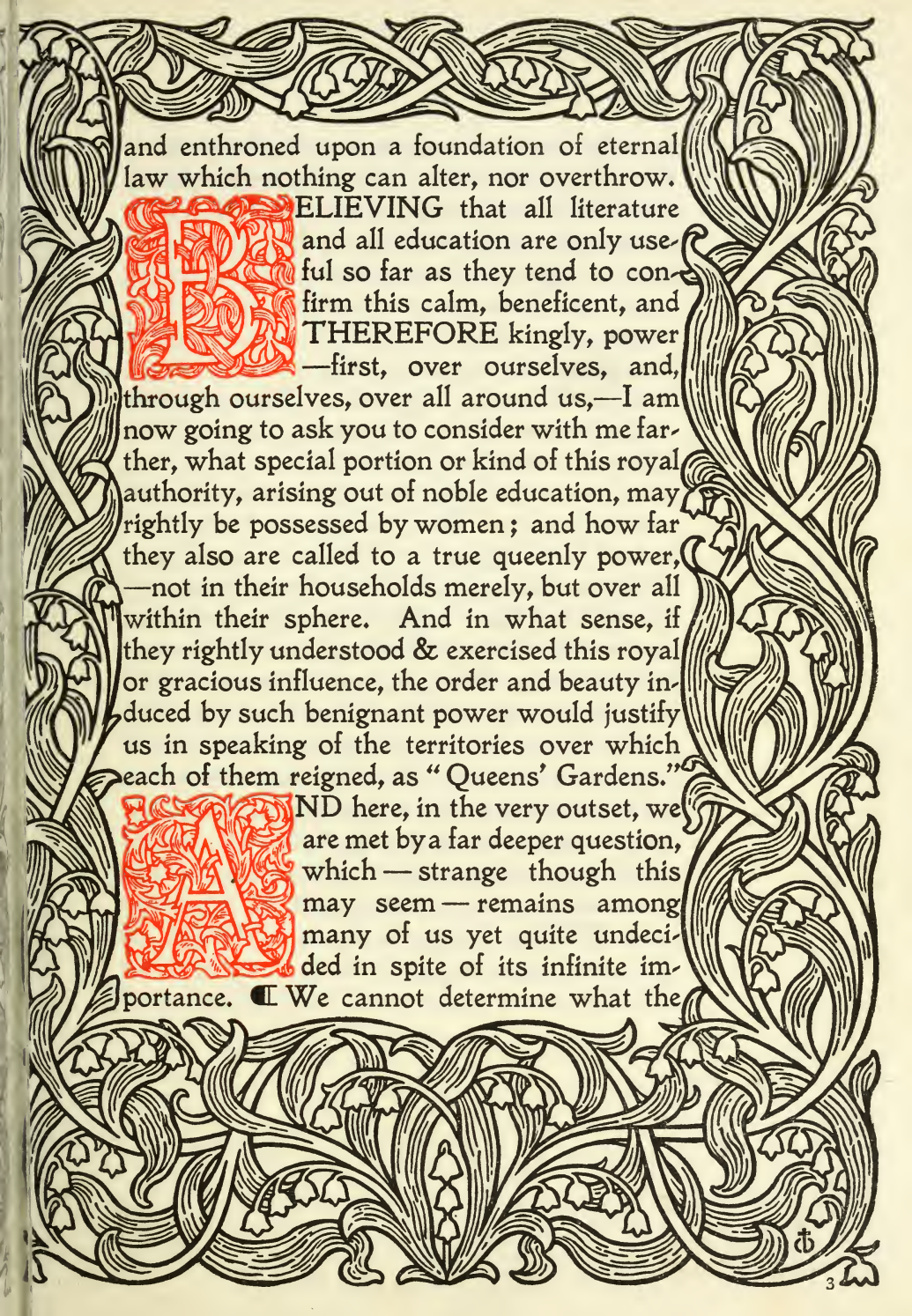
OF QUEENS' GARDENS

IT will, perhaps, be well, as this Lecture is the sequel of one previously given, that I should shortly state to you my general intention in both. The questions specially proposed to you in the first, namely, How and What to Read, rose out of a far deeper one, which it was my endeavour to make you propose earnestly to yourselves, namely, WHY to Read. I want you to feel, with me, that whatever advantages we possess in the present day in the diffusion of education and of literature, can only be rightly used by any of us when we have apprehended clearly what education is to lead to, and literature to teach. I wish you to see that both well-directed moral training and well-chosen reading lead to the possession of a power over the ill-guided and illiterate, which is, according to the measure of it, in the truest sense, KINGLY; conferring indeed the purest kingship that can exist among



men: too many other kingships (however distinguished by visible insignia or material power) being either spectral, or tyrannous;—spectral—that is to say, aspects and shadows only of royalty, hollow as death, and which only the “likeness of a kingly crown have on”: or else—tyrannous—that is to say, substituting their own will for the law of justice and love by which all true kings rule.

THERE is, then, I repeat—and as I want to leave this idea with you, I begin with it, and shall end with it—only one pure kind of kingship; an inevitable and eternal kind, crowned or not; the kingship, namely, which consists in a stronger moral state, and a truer thoughtful state, than that of others; enabling you, therefore, to guide, or to raise them. Observe that word “State”; we have got into a loose way of using it. It means literally the standing and stability of a thing; and you have the full force of it in the derived word “statue”—“the immovable thing.” A king’s majesty or “state,” then, and the right of his kingdom to be called a state, depends on the movelessness of both:—without tremor, without quiver of balance; established

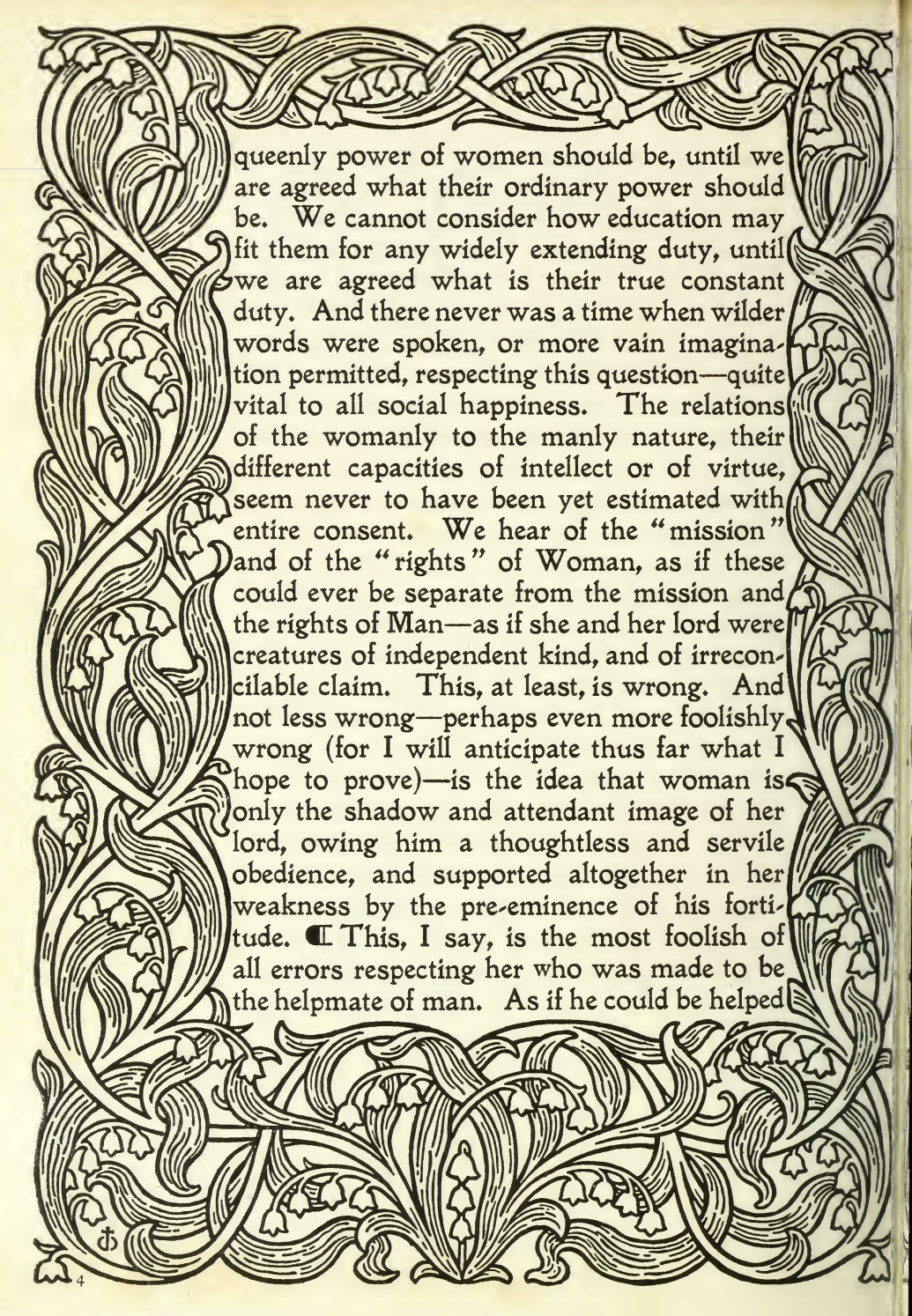


and enthroned upon a foundation of eternal law which nothing can alter, nor overthrow.

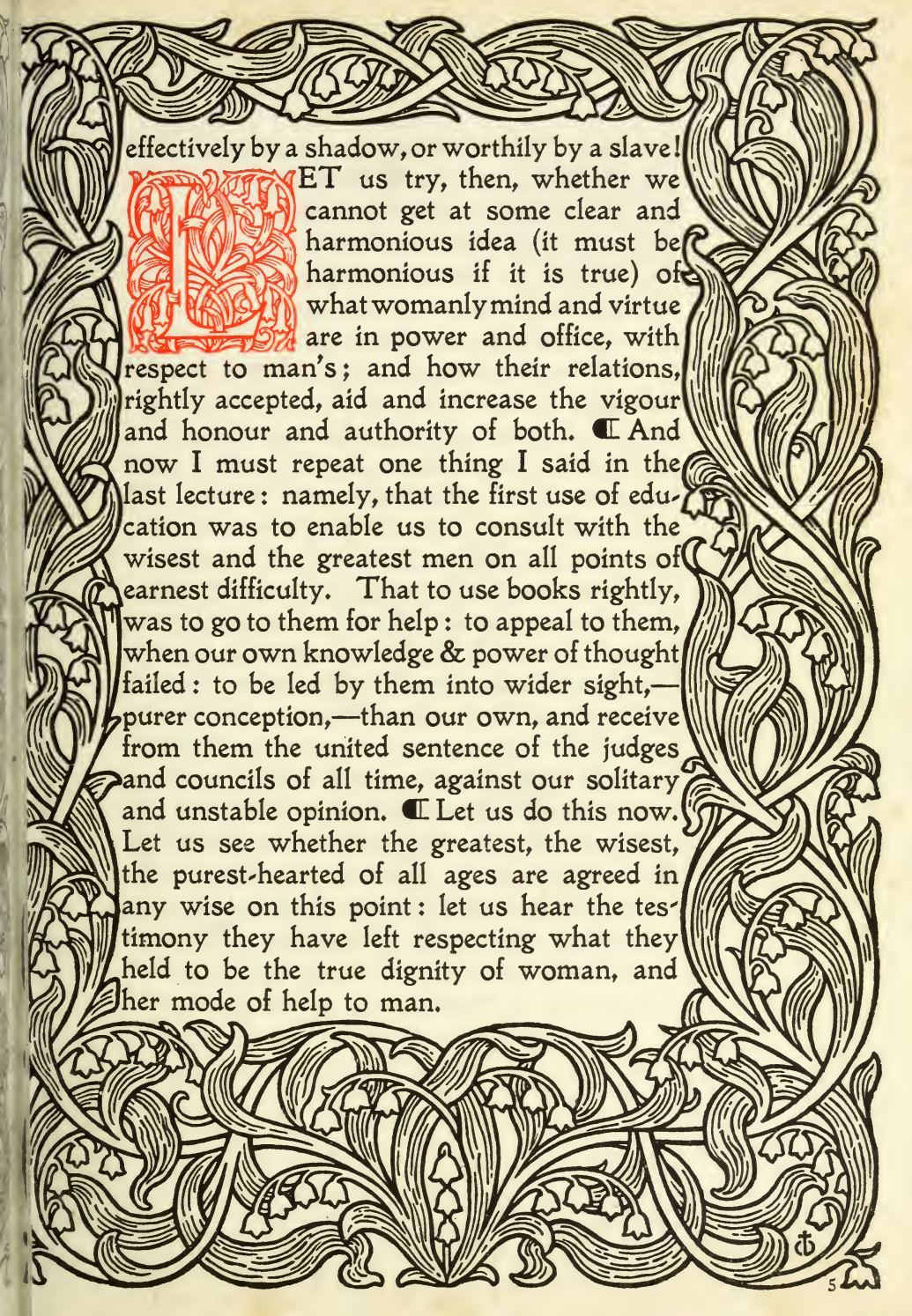
BELIEVING that all literature and all education are only useful so far as they tend to confirm this calm, beneficent, and **THEREFORE** kingly, power

—first, over ourselves, and, through ourselves, over all around us,—I am now going to ask you to consider with me farther, what special portion or kind of this royal authority, arising out of noble education, may rightly be possessed by women; and how far they also are called to a true queenly power,—not in their households merely, but over all within their sphere. And in what sense, if they rightly understood & exercised this royal or gracious influence, the order and beauty induced by such benignant power would justify us in speaking of the territories over which each of them reigned, as “Queens’ Gardens.”

AND here, in the very outset, we are met by a far deeper question, which—strange though this may seem—remains among many of us yet quite undecided in spite of its infinite importance. ¶ We cannot determine what the

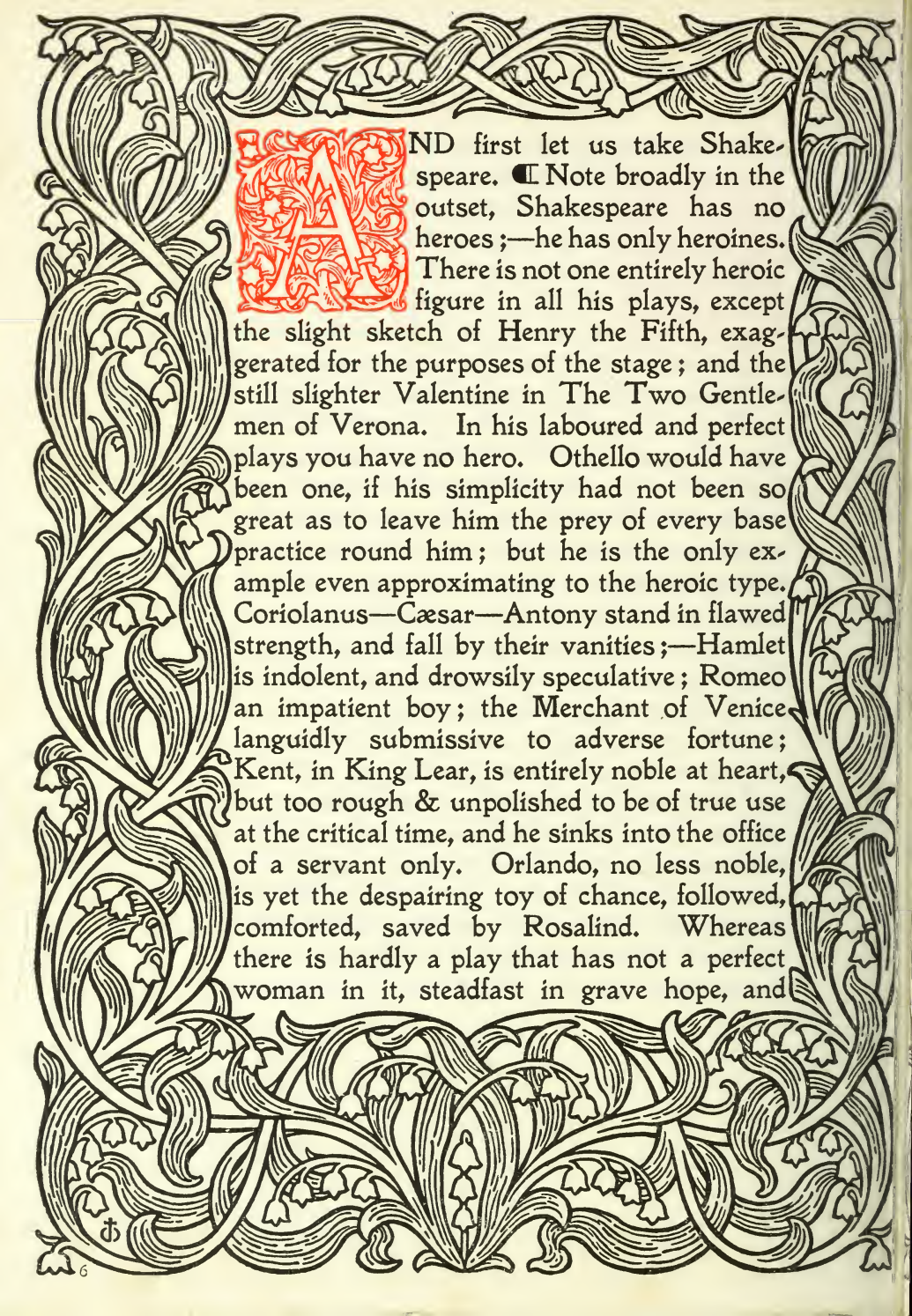
A highly detailed decorative border in a classic Art Nouveau style, featuring intricate, symmetrical floral and foliate motifs. The design consists of flowing, ribbon-like lines that intertwine with stylized leaves and flower-like shapes, creating a dense and elegant frame around the central text. The border is composed of multiple layers of these motifs, with some elements appearing to overlap or emerge from the background.

queenly power of women should be, until we are agreed what their ordinary power should be. We cannot consider how education may fit them for any widely extending duty, until we are agreed what is their true constant duty. And there never was a time when wilder words were spoken, or more vain imagination permitted, respecting this question—quite vital to all social happiness. The relations of the womanly to the manly nature, their different capacities of intellect or of virtue, seem never to have been yet estimated with entire consent. We hear of the “mission” and of the “rights” of Woman, as if these could ever be separate from the mission and the rights of Man—as if she and her lord were creatures of independent kind, and of irreconcilable claim. This, at least, is wrong. And not less wrong—perhaps even more foolishly wrong (for I will anticipate thus far what I hope to prove)—is the idea that woman is only the shadow and attendant image of her lord, owing him a thoughtless and servile obedience, and supported altogether in her weakness by the pre-eminence of his fortitude. ¶ This, I say, is the most foolish of all errors respecting her who was made to be the helpmate of man. As if he could be helped

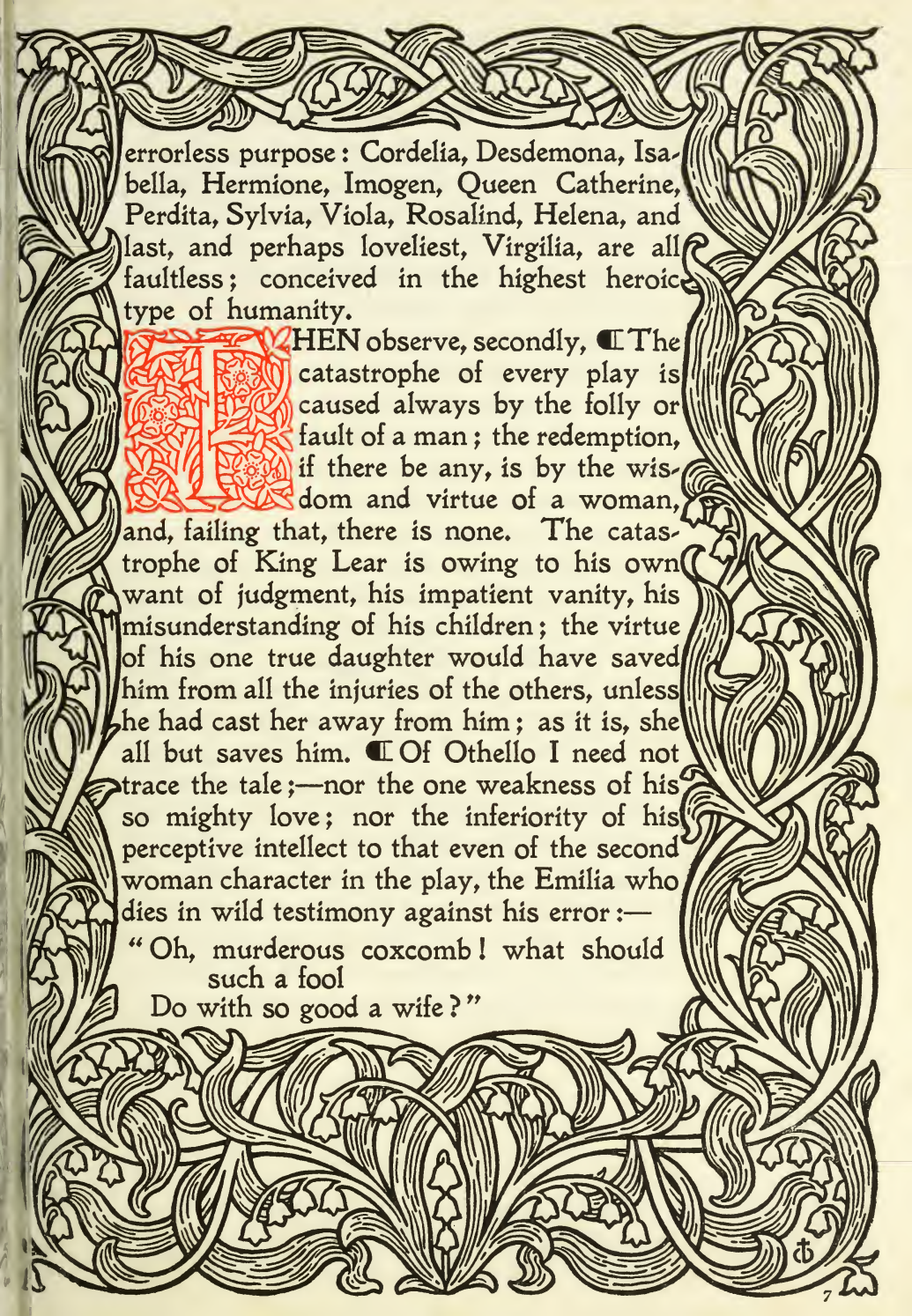
A highly detailed decorative border in a black and white Art Nouveau style. It features intricate, flowing lines that form stylized leaves, vines, and floral motifs, framing the central text. The design is symmetrical and fills the entire page.

effectively by a shadow, or worthily by a slave!

LET us try, then, whether we cannot get at some clear and harmonious idea (it must be harmonious if it is true) of what womanly mind and virtue are in power and office, with respect to man's; and how their relations, rightly accepted, aid and increase the vigour and honour and authority of both. ¶ And now I must repeat one thing I said in the last lecture: namely, that the first use of education was to enable us to consult with the wisest and the greatest men on all points of earnest difficulty. That to use books rightly, was to go to them for help: to appeal to them, when our own knowledge & power of thought failed: to be led by them into wider sight,—purer conception,—than our own, and receive from them the united sentence of the judges and councils of all time, against our solitary and unstable opinion. ¶ Let us do this now. Let us see whether the greatest, the wisest, the purest-hearted of all ages are agreed in any wise on this point: let us hear the testimony they have left respecting what they held to be the true dignity of woman, and her mode of help to man.

A highly detailed decorative border in a black and white line-art style, featuring intricate floral and foliate motifs that frame the text. The border is composed of repeating patterns of leaves, stems, and small flowers, creating a rich, textured frame around the central text block.

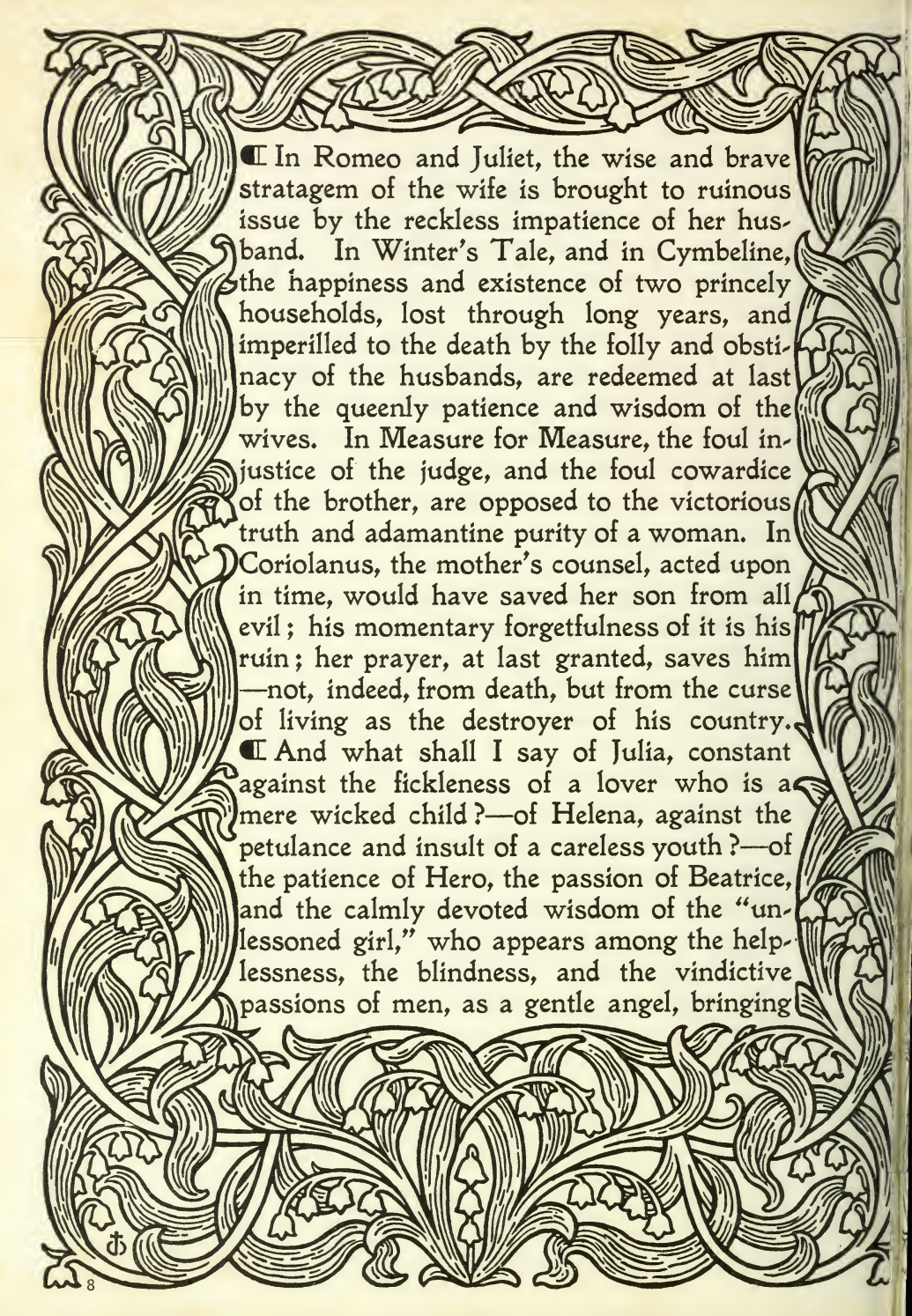
AND first let us take Shakespeare. ¶ Note broadly in the outset, Shakespeare has no heroes;—he has only heroines. There is not one entirely heroic figure in all his plays, except the slight sketch of Henry the Fifth, exaggerated for the purposes of the stage; and the still slighter Valentine in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. In his laboured and perfect plays you have no hero. Othello would have been one, if his simplicity had not been so great as to leave him the prey of every base practice round him; but he is the only example even approximating to the heroic type. Coriolanus—Cæsar—Antony stand in flawed strength, and fall by their vanities;—Hamlet is indolent, and drowsily speculative; Romeo an impatient boy; the Merchant of Venice languidly submissive to adverse fortune; Kent, in *King Lear*, is entirely noble at heart, but too rough & unpolished to be of true use at the critical time, and he sinks into the office of a servant only. Orlando, no less noble, is yet the despairing toy of chance, followed, comforted, saved by Rosalind. Whereas there is hardly a play that has not a perfect woman in it, steadfast in grave hope, and

A highly decorative border surrounds the text, featuring intricate, symmetrical floral and foliate patterns in black ink. The design includes stylized leaves, flowers, and scrolling vines that frame the central text block.

errorless purpose : Cordelia, Desdemona, Isabella, Hermione, Imogen, Queen Catherine, Perdita, Sylvia, Viola, Rosalind, Helena, and last, and perhaps loveliest, Virgilia, are all faultless ; conceived in the highest heroic type of humanity.

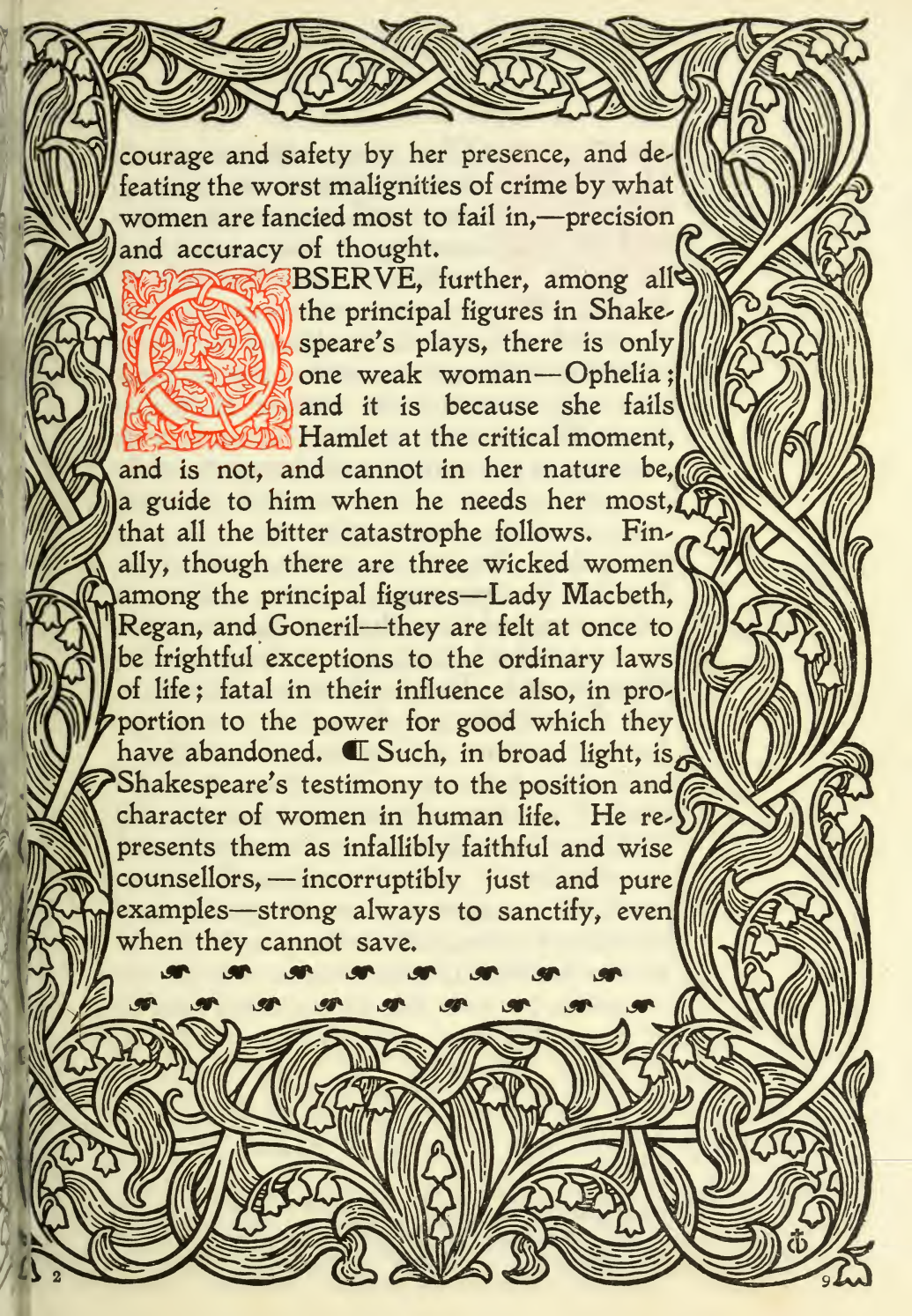
THEN observe, secondly, ¶ The catastrophe of every play is caused always by the folly or fault of a man ; the redemption, if there be any, is by the wisdom and virtue of a woman, and, failing that, there is none. The catastrophe of King Lear is owing to his own want of judgment, his impatient vanity, his misunderstanding of his children ; the virtue of his one true daughter would have saved him from all the injuries of the others, unless he had cast her away from him ; as it is, she all but saves him. ¶ Of Othello I need not trace the tale ;—nor the one weakness of his so mighty love ; nor the inferiority of his perceptive intellect to that even of the second woman character in the play, the Emilia who dies in wild testimony against his error :—

“ Oh, murderous coxcomb ! what should
such a fool
Do with so good a wife ? ”



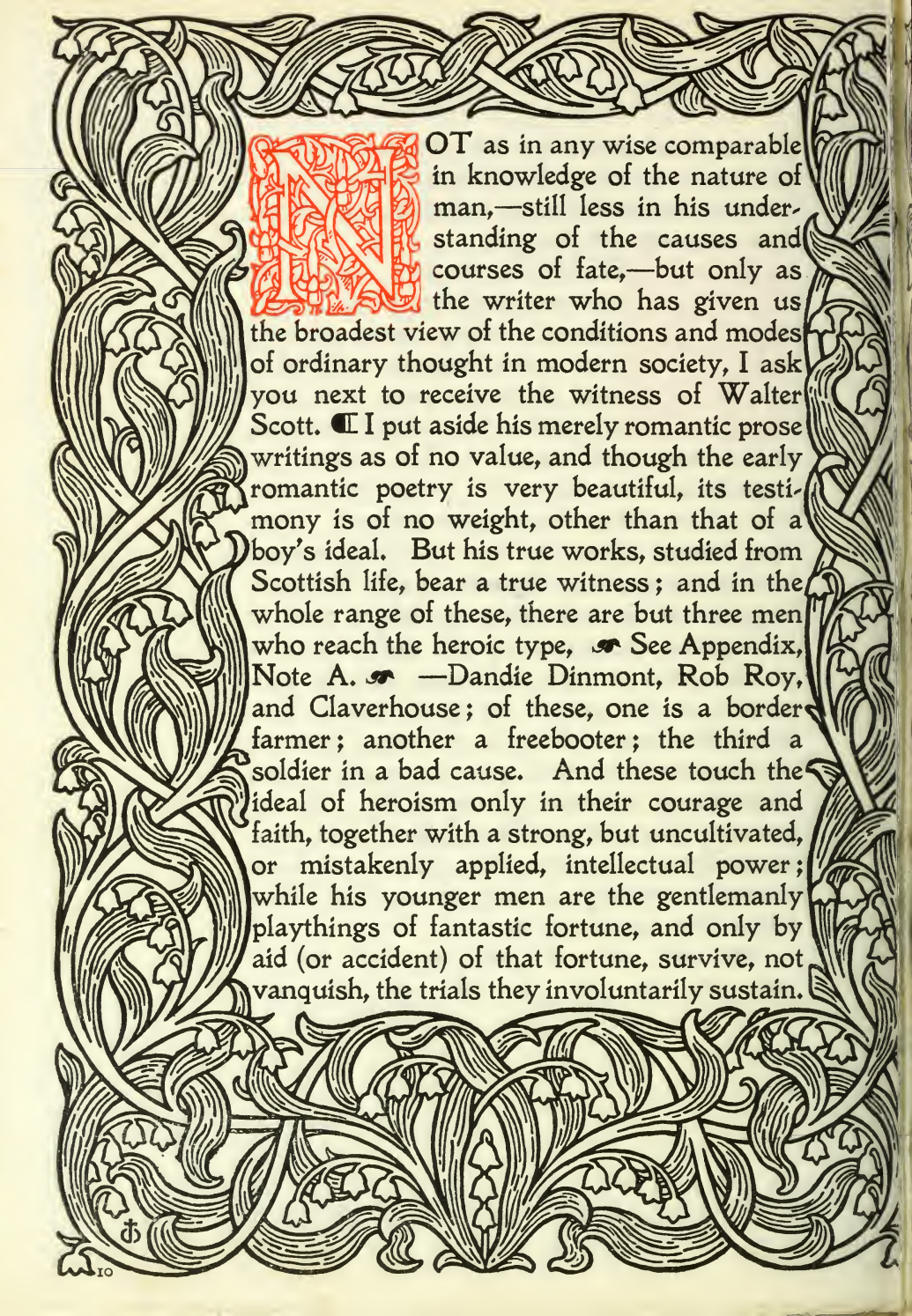
¶ In *Romeo and Juliet*, the wise and brave stratagem of the wife is brought to ruinous issue by the reckless impatience of her husband. In *Winter's Tale*, and in *Cymbeline*, the happiness and existence of two princely households, lost through long years, and imperilled to the death by the folly and obstinacy of the husbands, are redeemed at last by the queenly patience and wisdom of the wives. In *Measure for Measure*, the foul injustice of the judge, and the foul cowardice of the brother, are opposed to the victorious truth and adamant purity of a woman. In *Coriolanus*, the mother's counsel, acted upon in time, would have saved her son from all evil; his momentary forgetfulness of it is his ruin; her prayer, at last granted, saves him—not, indeed, from death, but from the curse of living as the destroyer of his country.

¶ And what shall I say of *Julia*, constant against the fickleness of a lover who is a mere wicked child?—of *Helena*, against the petulance and insult of a careless youth?—of the patience of *Hero*, the passion of *Beatrice*, and the calmly devoted wisdom of the “unlessoned girl,” who appears among the helplessness, the blindness, and the vindictive passions of men, as a gentle angel, bringing

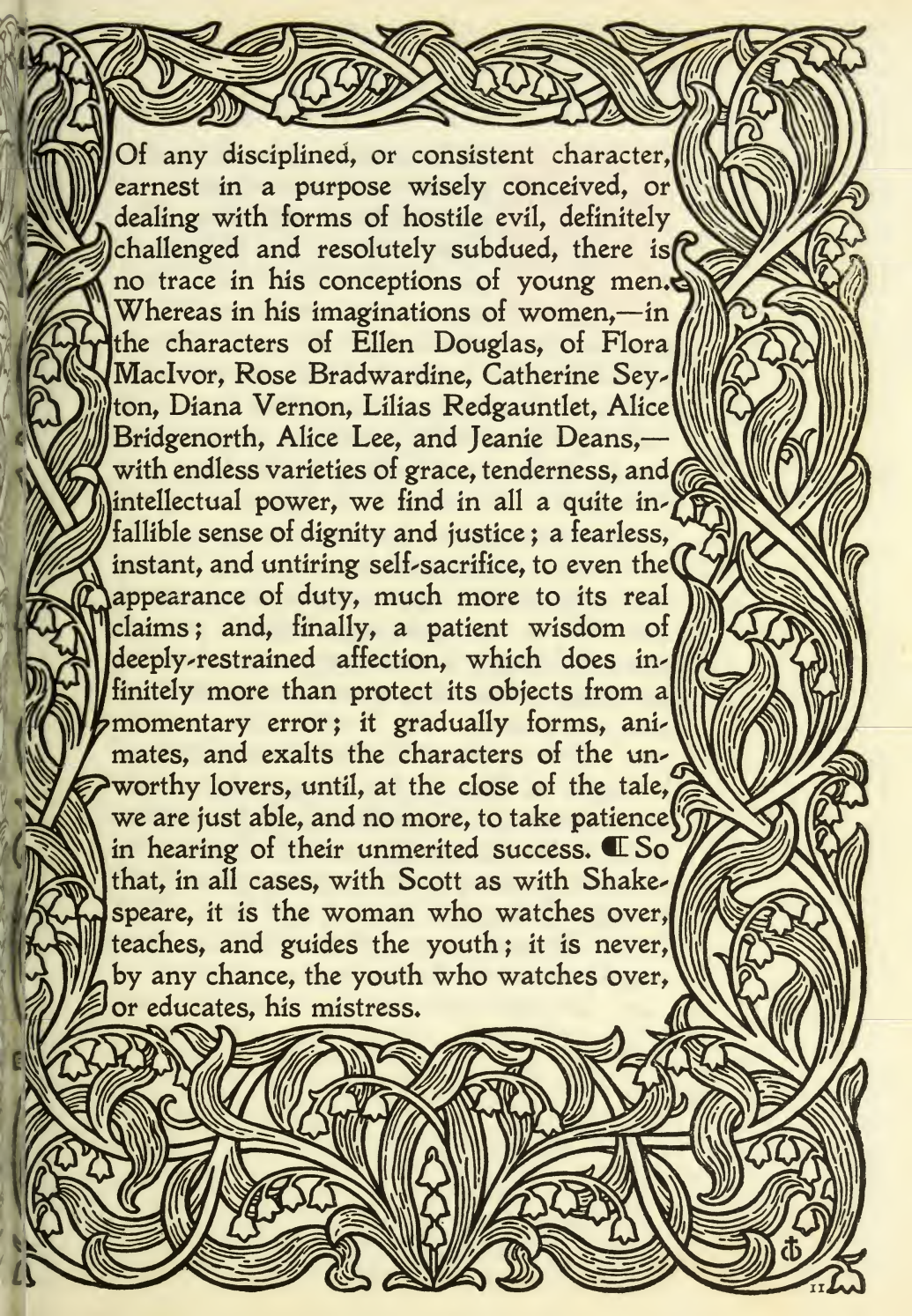
A highly detailed decorative border in a black and white Art Nouveau style surrounds the text. It features intricate, flowing lines that form stylized floral and leaf patterns, with small bell-shaped flowers interspersed throughout. The border is particularly dense at the top and bottom, framing the central text area.

courage and safety by her presence, and defeating the worst malignities of crime by what women are fancied most to fail in,—precision and accuracy of thought.

OBSERVE, further, among all the principal figures in Shakespeare's plays, there is only one weak woman—Ophelia; and it is because she fails Hamlet at the critical moment, and is not, and cannot in her nature be, a guide to him when he needs her most, that all the bitter catastrophe follows. Finally, though there are three wicked women among the principal figures—Lady Macbeth, Regan, and Goneril—they are felt at once to be frightful exceptions to the ordinary laws of life; fatal in their influence also, in proportion to the power for good which they have abandoned. ¶ Such, in broad light, is Shakespeare's testimony to the position and character of women in human life. He represents them as infallibly faithful and wise counsellors,—incorruptibly just and pure examples—strong always to sanctify, even when they cannot save.



NOT as in any wise comparable in knowledge of the nature of man,—still less in his understanding of the causes and courses of fate,—but only as the writer who has given us the broadest view of the conditions and modes of ordinary thought in modern society, I ask you next to receive the witness of Walter Scott. ¶ I put aside his merely romantic prose writings as of no value, and though the early romantic poetry is very beautiful, its testimony is of no weight, other than that of a boy's ideal. But his true works, studied from Scottish life, bear a true witness; and in the whole range of these, there are but three men who reach the heroic type, ♣ See Appendix, Note A. ♣ —Dandie Dinmont, Rob Roy, and Claverhouse; of these, one is a border farmer; another a freebooter; the third a soldier in a bad cause. And these touch the ideal of heroism only in their courage and faith, together with a strong, but uncultivated, or mistakenly applied, intellectual power; while his younger men are the gentlemanly playthings of fantastic fortune, and only by aid (or accident) of that fortune, survive, not vanquish, the trials they involuntarily sustain.

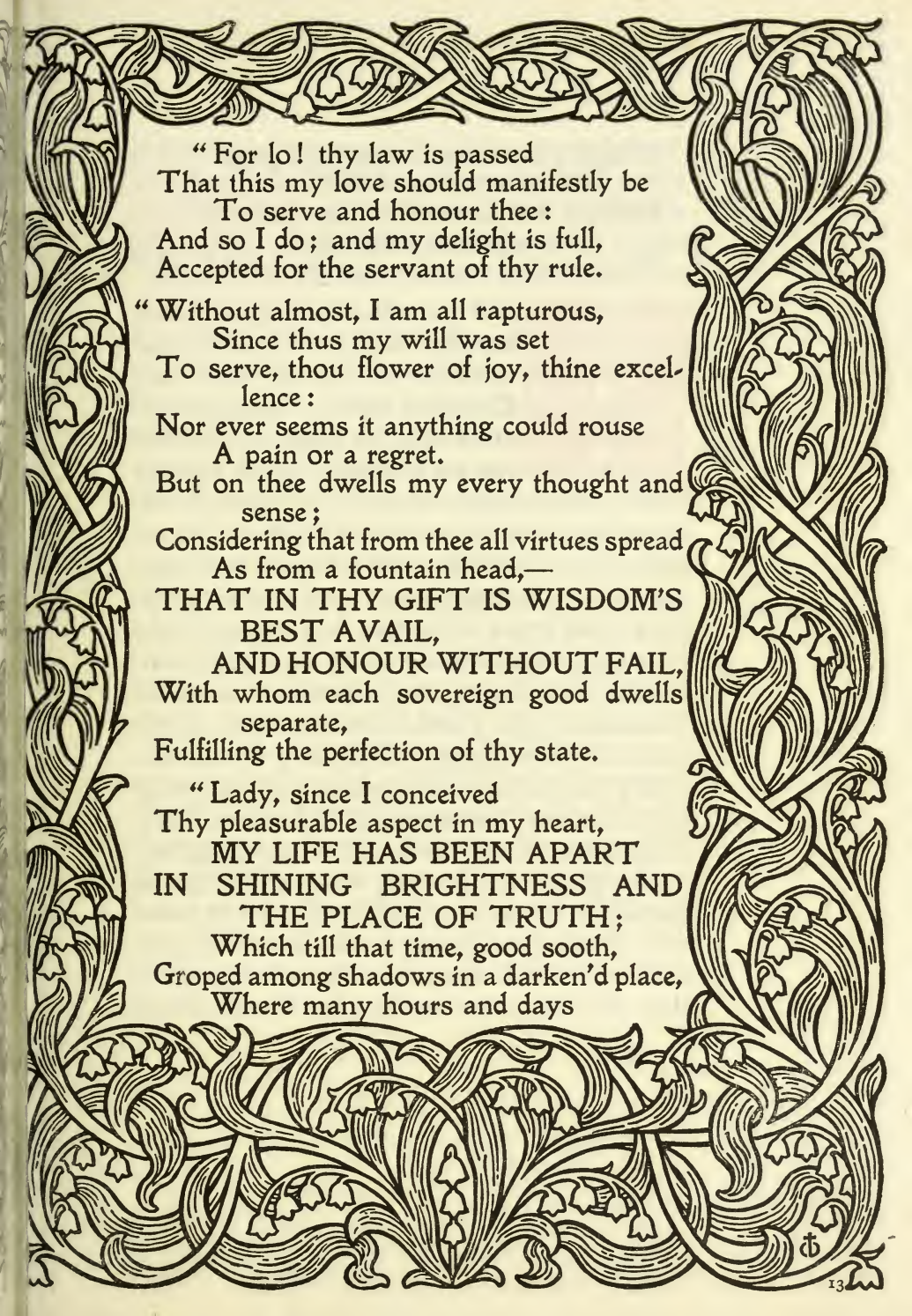


Of any disciplined, or consistent character, earnest in a purpose wisely conceived, or dealing with forms of hostile evil, definitely challenged and resolutely subdued, there is no trace in his conceptions of young men. Whereas in his imaginations of women,—in the characters of Ellen Douglas, of Flora MacIvor, Rose Bradwardine, Catherine Seyton, Diana Vernon, Liliás Redgauntlet, Alice Bridgenorth, Alice Lee, and Jeanie Deans,—with endless varieties of grace, tenderness, and intellectual power, we find in all a quite infallible sense of dignity and justice; a fearless, instant, and untiring self-sacrifice, to even the appearance of duty, much more to its real claims; and, finally, a patient wisdom of deeply-restrained affection, which does infinitely more than protect its objects from a momentary error; it gradually forms, animates, and exalts the characters of the unworthy lovers, until, at the close of the tale, we are just able, and no more, to take patience in hearing of their unmerited success. ¶ So that, in all cases, with Scott as with Shakespeare, it is the woman who watches over, teaches, and guides the youth; it is never, by any chance, the youth who watches over, or educates, his mistress.

A highly detailed decorative border in a black and white line-art style, featuring intricate floral and foliate motifs that frame the text. The border is composed of repeating patterns of leaves, stems, and small flowers, creating a rich, textured frame around the central text block.

NEXT

take, though more briefly, graver testimony—that of the great Italians and Greeks. You know well the plan of Dante's great poem—that it is a love-poem to his dead lady; a song of praise for her watch over his soul. Stoop-
ing only to pity, never to love, she yet saves him from destruction—saves him from hell. He is going eternally astray in despair; she comes down from heaven to his help, and throughout the ascents of Paradise is his teacher, interpreting for him the most difficult truths, divine and human; and leading him, with rebuke upon rebuke, from star to star. ¶ I do not insist upon Dante's conception; if I began I could not cease: besides, you might think this a wild imagination of one poet's heart. So I will rather read to you a few verses of the deliberate writing of a knight of Pisa to his living lady, wholly characteristic of the feeling of all the noblest men of the thirteenth, or early fourteenth, century, preserved among many other such records of knightly honour and love, which Dante Rossetti has gathered for us from among the early Italian poets.



“For lo! thy law is passed
That this my love should manifestly be
To serve and honour thee:
And so I do; and my delight is full,
Accepted for the servant of thy rule.

“Without almost, I am all rapturous,
Since thus my will was set
To serve, thou flower of joy, thine excel-
lence:

Nor ever seems it anything could rouse
A pain or a regret.
But on thee dwells my every thought and
sense;

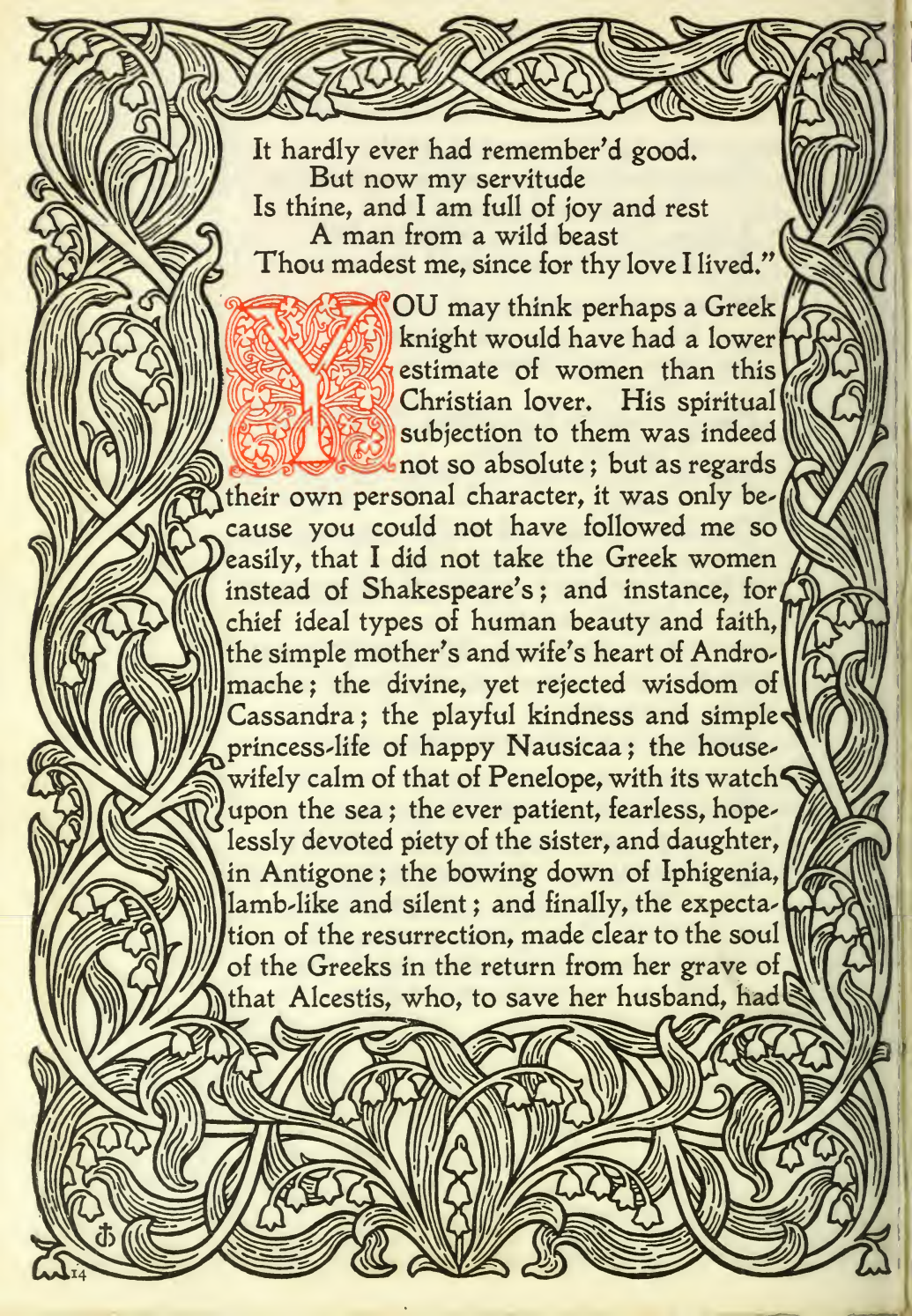
Considering that from thee all virtues spread
As from a fountain head,—

**THAT IN THY GIFT IS WISDOM'S
BEST AVAIL,**

AND HONOUR WITHOUT FAIL,
With whom each sovereign good dwells
separate,

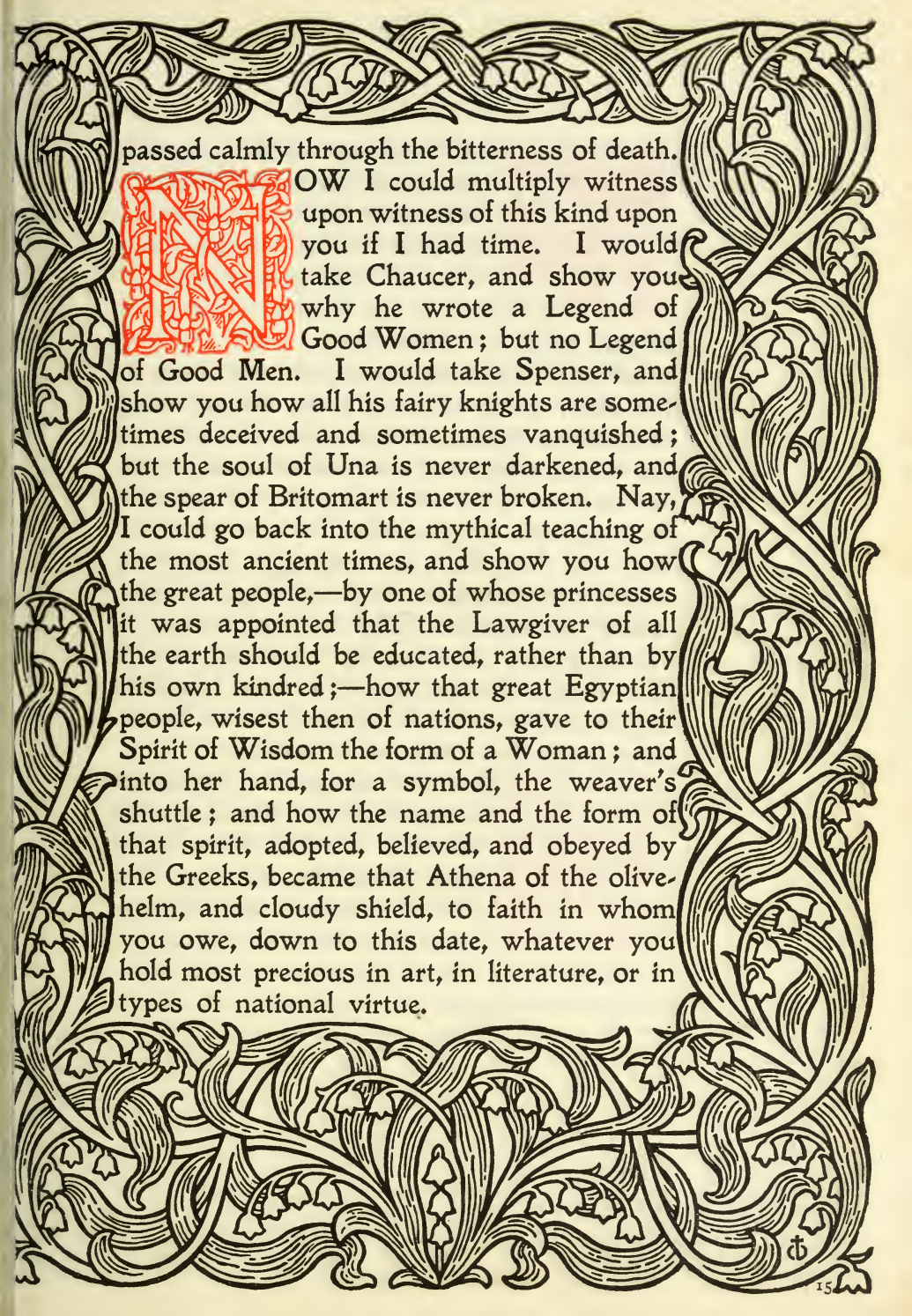
Fulfilling the perfection of thy state.

“Lady, since I conceived
Thy pleasurable aspect in my heart,
**MY LIFE HAS BEEN APART
IN SHINING BRIGHTNESS AND
THE PLACE OF TRUTH;**
Which till that time, good sooth,
Groped among shadows in a darken'd place,
Where many hours and days

A highly detailed decorative border in a black and white Art Nouveau style, featuring intricate, swirling floral and leaf patterns that frame the text. The border is composed of repeating motifs of stylized flowers and leaves, creating a dense, ornate frame.

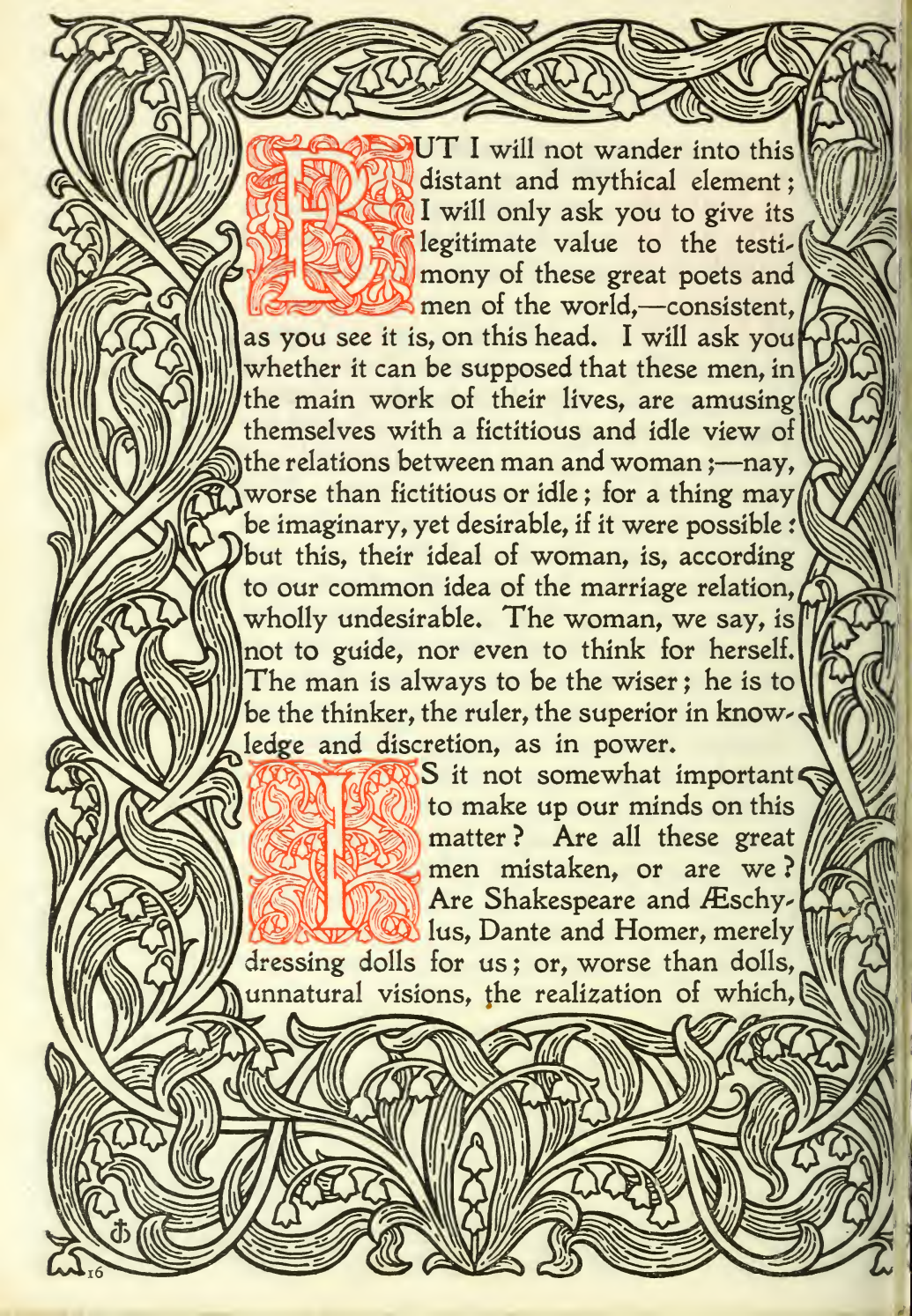
It hardly ever had remember'd good.
But now my servitude
Is thine, and I am full of joy and rest
A man from a wild beast
Thou madest me, since for thy love I lived."

YOU may think perhaps a Greek knight would have had a lower estimate of women than this Christian lover. His spiritual subjection to them was indeed not so absolute; but as regards their own personal character, it was only because you could not have followed me so easily, that I did not take the Greek women instead of Shakespeare's; and instance, for chief ideal types of human beauty and faith, the simple mother's and wife's heart of Andromache; the divine, yet rejected wisdom of Cassandra; the playful kindness and simple princess-life of happy Nausicaa; the housewifely calm of that of Penelope, with its watch upon the sea; the ever patient, fearless, hopelessly devoted piety of the sister, and daughter, in Antigone; the bowing down of Iphigenia, lamb-like and silent; and finally, the expectation of the resurrection, made clear to the soul of the Greeks in the return from her grave of that Alcestis, who, to save her husband, had



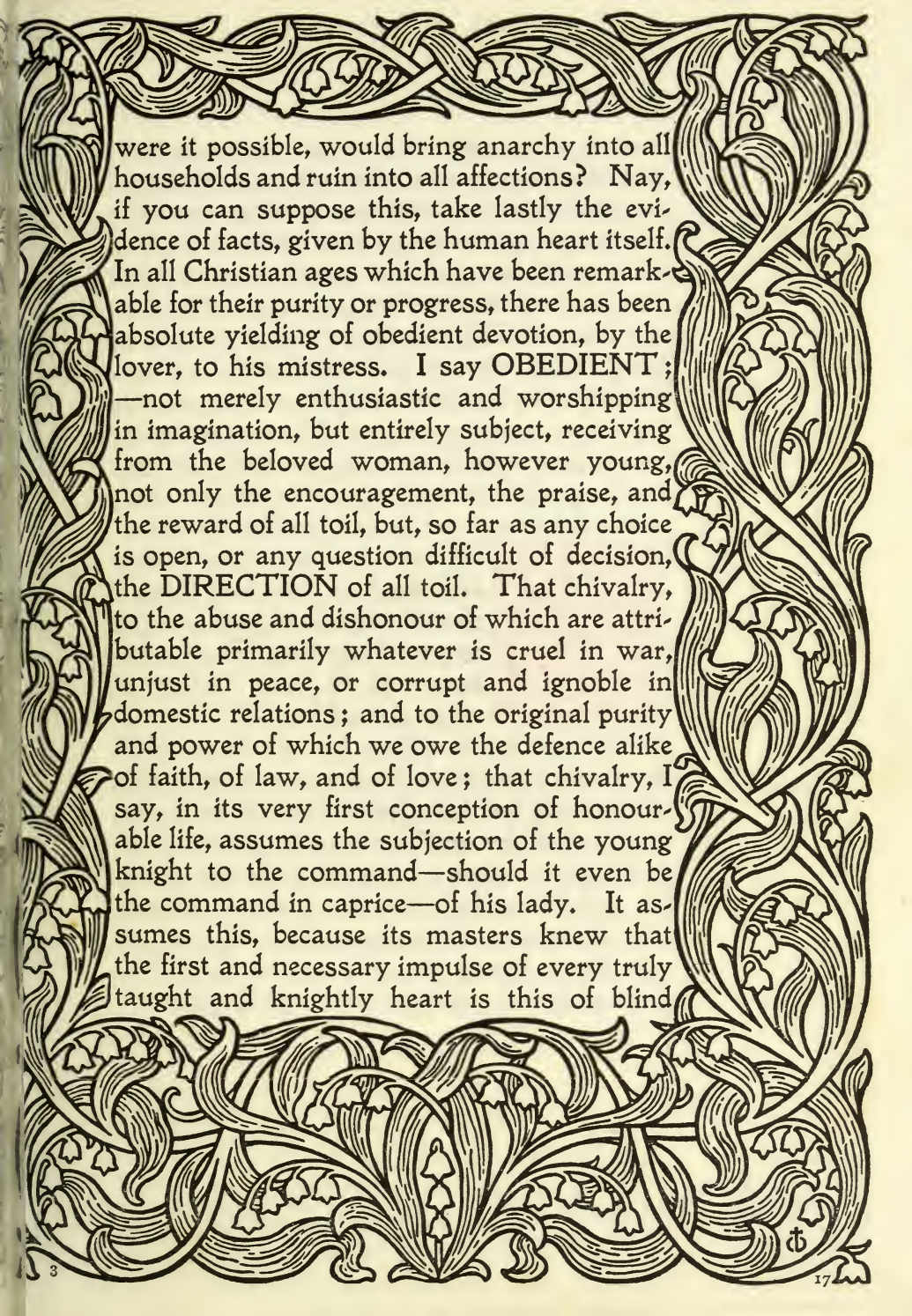
passed calmly through the bitterness of death.

NOW I could multiply witness upon witness of this kind upon you if I had time. I would take Chaucer, and show you why he wrote a Legend of Good Women; but no Legend of Good Men. I would take Spenser, and show you how all his fairy knights are sometimes deceived and sometimes vanquished; but the soul of Una is never darkened, and the spear of Britomart is never broken. Nay, I could go back into the mythical teaching of the most ancient times, and show you how the great people,—by one of whose princesses it was appointed that the Lawgiver of all the earth should be educated, rather than by his own kindred;—how that great Egyptian people, wisest then of nations, gave to their Spirit of Wisdom the form of a Woman; and into her hand, for a symbol, the weaver's shuttle; and how the name and the form of that spirit, adopted, believed, and obeyed by the Greeks, became that Athena of the olive-helm, and cloudy shield, to faith in whom you owe, down to this date, whatever you hold most precious in art, in literature, or in types of national virtue.

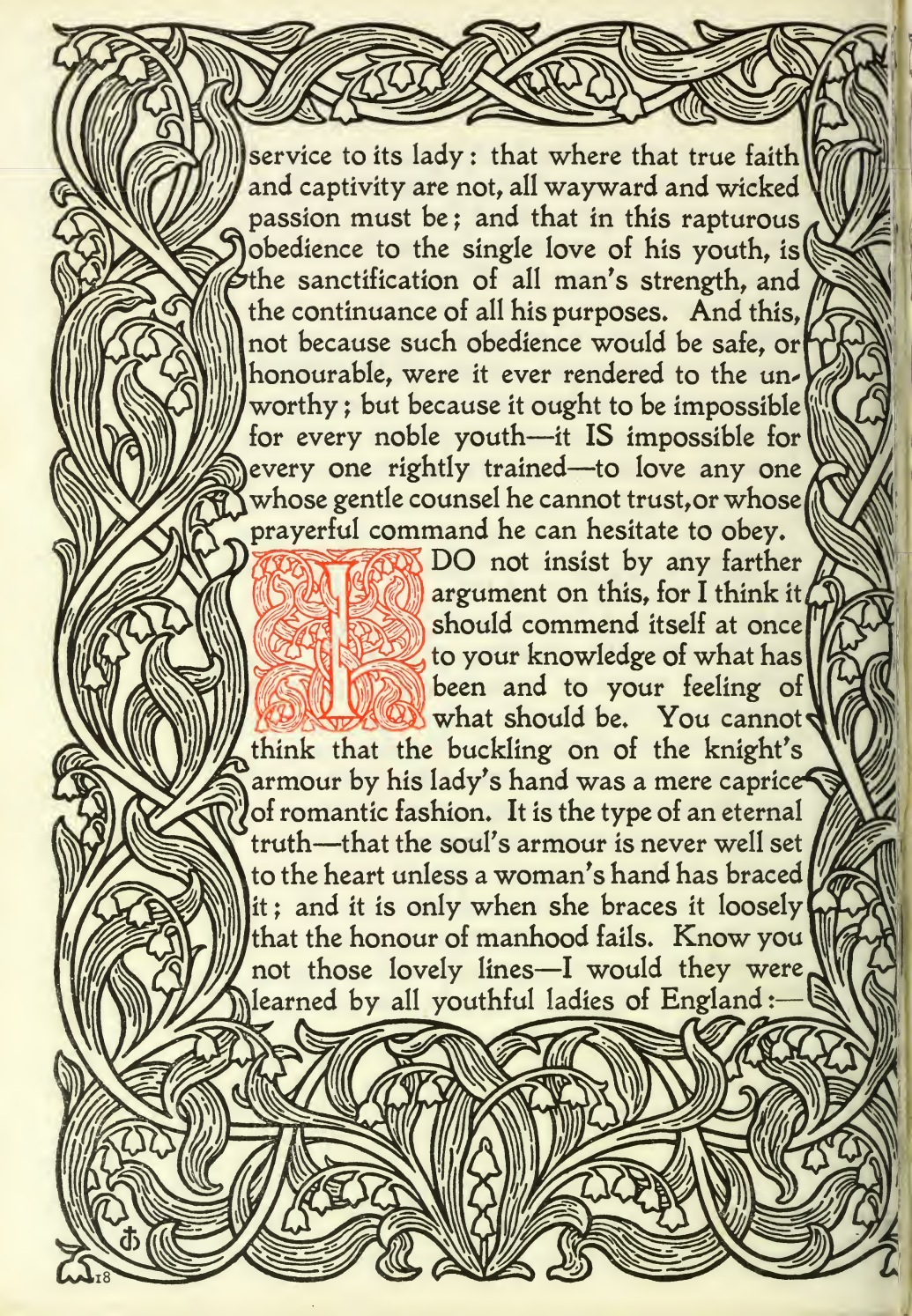


BUT I will not wander into this distant and mythical element ; I will only ask you to give its legitimate value to the testimony of these great poets and men of the world,—consistent, as you see it is, on this head. I will ask you whether it can be supposed that these men, in the main work of their lives, are amusing themselves with a fictitious and idle view of the relations between man and woman ;—nay, worse than fictitious or idle ; for a thing may be imaginary, yet desirable, if it were possible : but this, their ideal of woman, is, according to our common idea of the marriage relation, wholly undesirable. The woman, we say, is not to guide, nor even to think for herself. The man is always to be the wiser ; he is to be the thinker, the ruler, the superior in knowledge and discretion, as in power.

IS it not somewhat important to make up our minds on this matter ? Are all these great men mistaken, or are we ? Are Shakespeare and Æschylus, Dante and Homer, merely dressing dolls for us ; or, worse than dolls, unnatural visions, the realization of which,

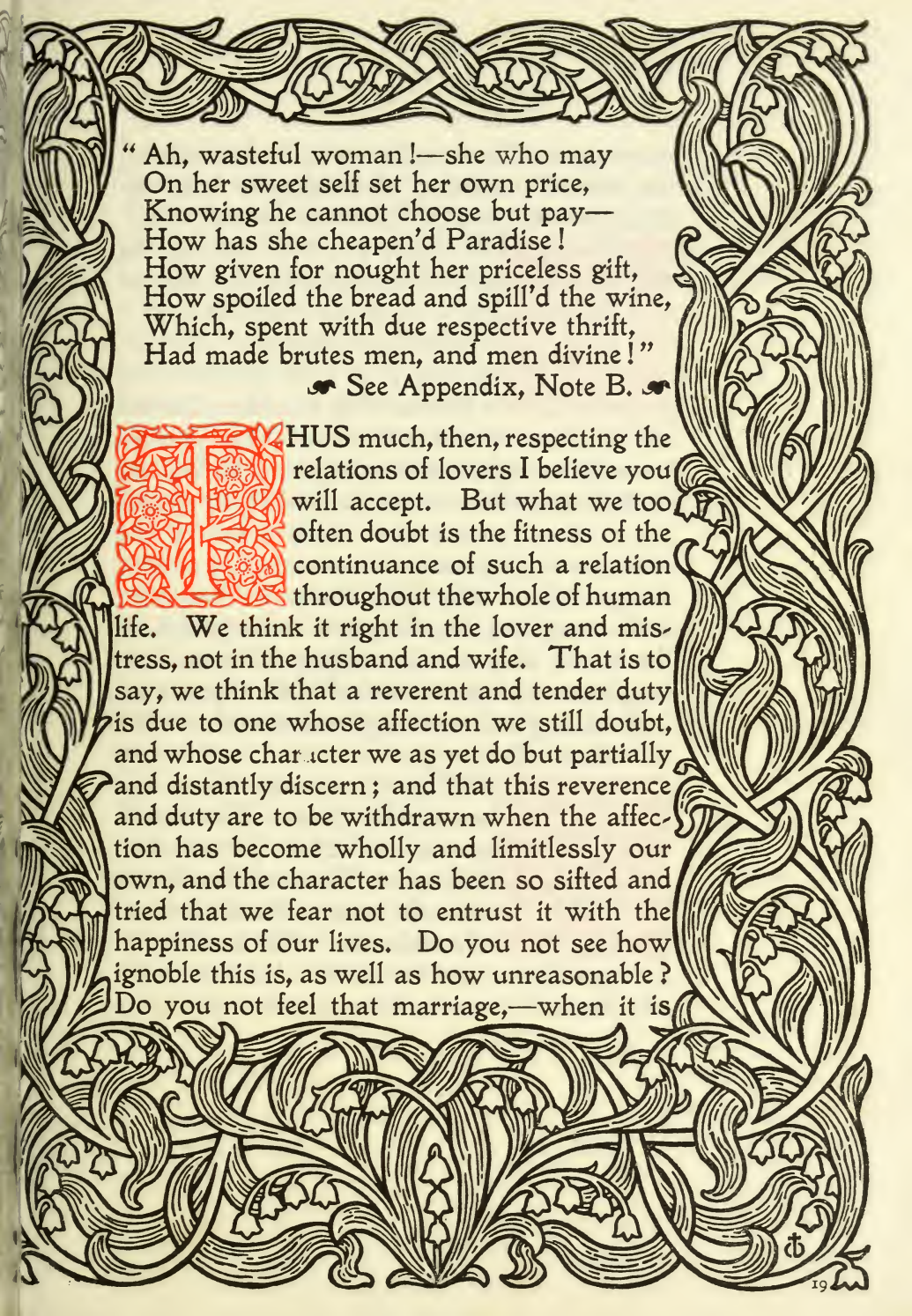


were it possible, would bring anarchy into all households and ruin into all affections? Nay, if you can suppose this, take lastly the evidence of facts, given by the human heart itself. In all Christian ages which have been remarkable for their purity or progress, there has been absolute yielding of obedient devotion, by the lover, to his mistress. I say OBEDIENT;—not merely enthusiastic and worshipping in imagination, but entirely subject, receiving from the beloved woman, however young, not only the encouragement, the praise, and the reward of all toil, but, so far as any choice is open, or any question difficult of decision, the DIRECTION of all toil. That chivalry, to the abuse and dishonour of which are attributable primarily whatever is cruel in war, unjust in peace, or corrupt and ignoble in domestic relations; and to the original purity and power of which we owe the defence alike of faith, of law, and of love; that chivalry, I say, in its very first conception of honourable life, assumes the subjection of the young knight to the command—should it even be the command in caprice—of his lady. It assumes this, because its masters knew that the first and necessary impulse of every truly taught and knightly heart is this of blind



service to its lady: that where that true faith and captivity are not, all wayward and wicked passion must be; and that in this rapturous obedience to the single love of his youth, is the sanctification of all man's strength, and the continuance of all his purposes. And this, not because such obedience would be safe, or honourable, were it ever rendered to the unworthy; but because it ought to be impossible for every noble youth—it IS impossible for every one rightly trained—to love any one whose gentle counsel he cannot trust, or whose prayerful command he can hesitate to obey.

DO not insist by any farther argument on this, for I think it should commend itself at once to your knowledge of what has been and to your feeling of what should be. You cannot think that the buckling on of the knight's armour by his lady's hand was a mere caprice of romantic fashion. It is the type of an eternal truth—that the soul's armour is never well set to the heart unless a woman's hand has braced it; and it is only when she braces it loosely that the honour of manhood fails. Know you not those lovely lines—I would they were learned by all youthful ladies of England:—

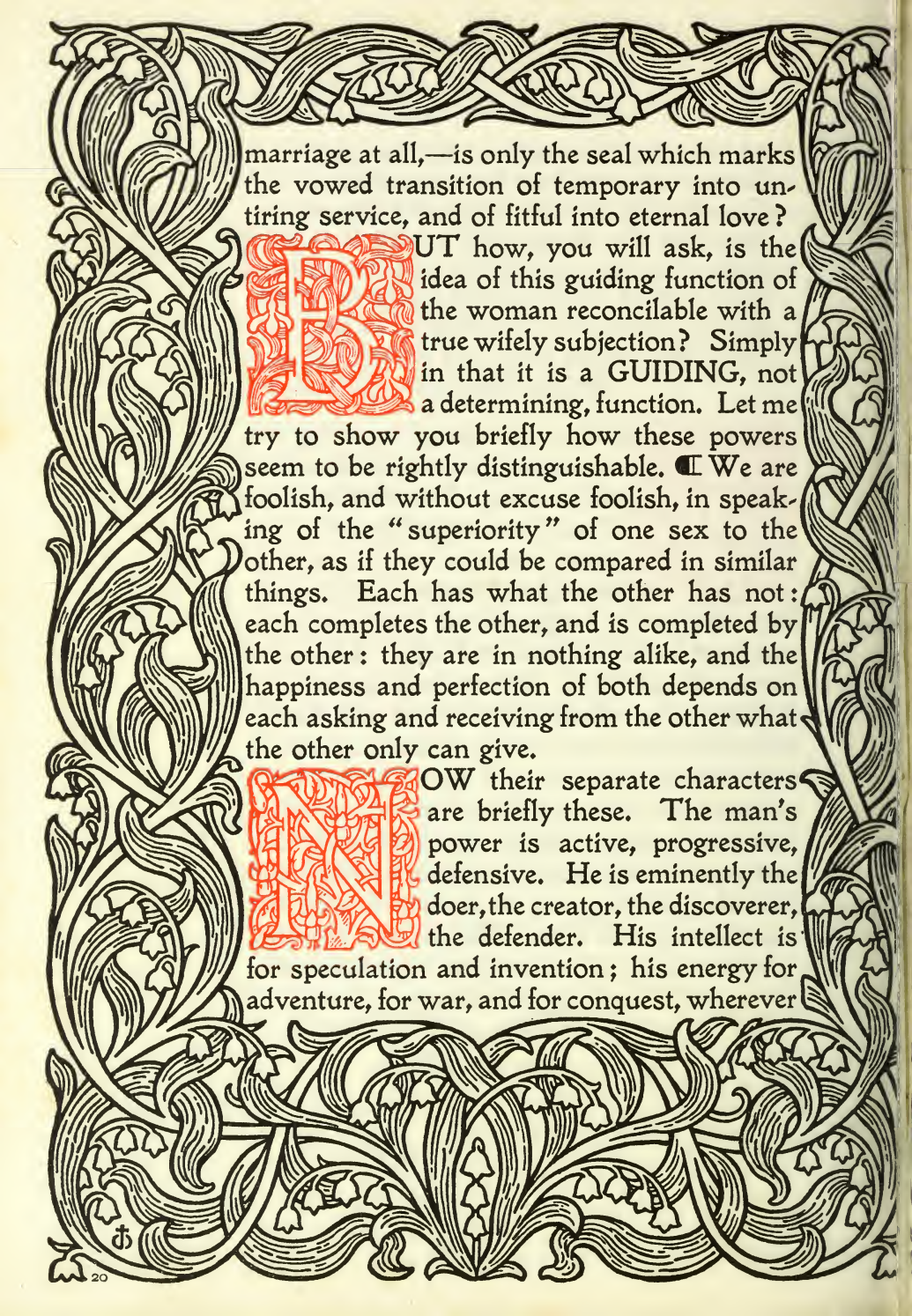


“ Ah, wasteful woman!—she who may
On her sweet self set her own price,
Knowing he cannot choose but pay—
How has she cheapen'd Paradise!
How given for nought her priceless gift,
How spoiled the bread and spill'd the wine,
Which, spent with due respective thrift,
Had made brutes men, and men divine!”

See Appendix, Note B.



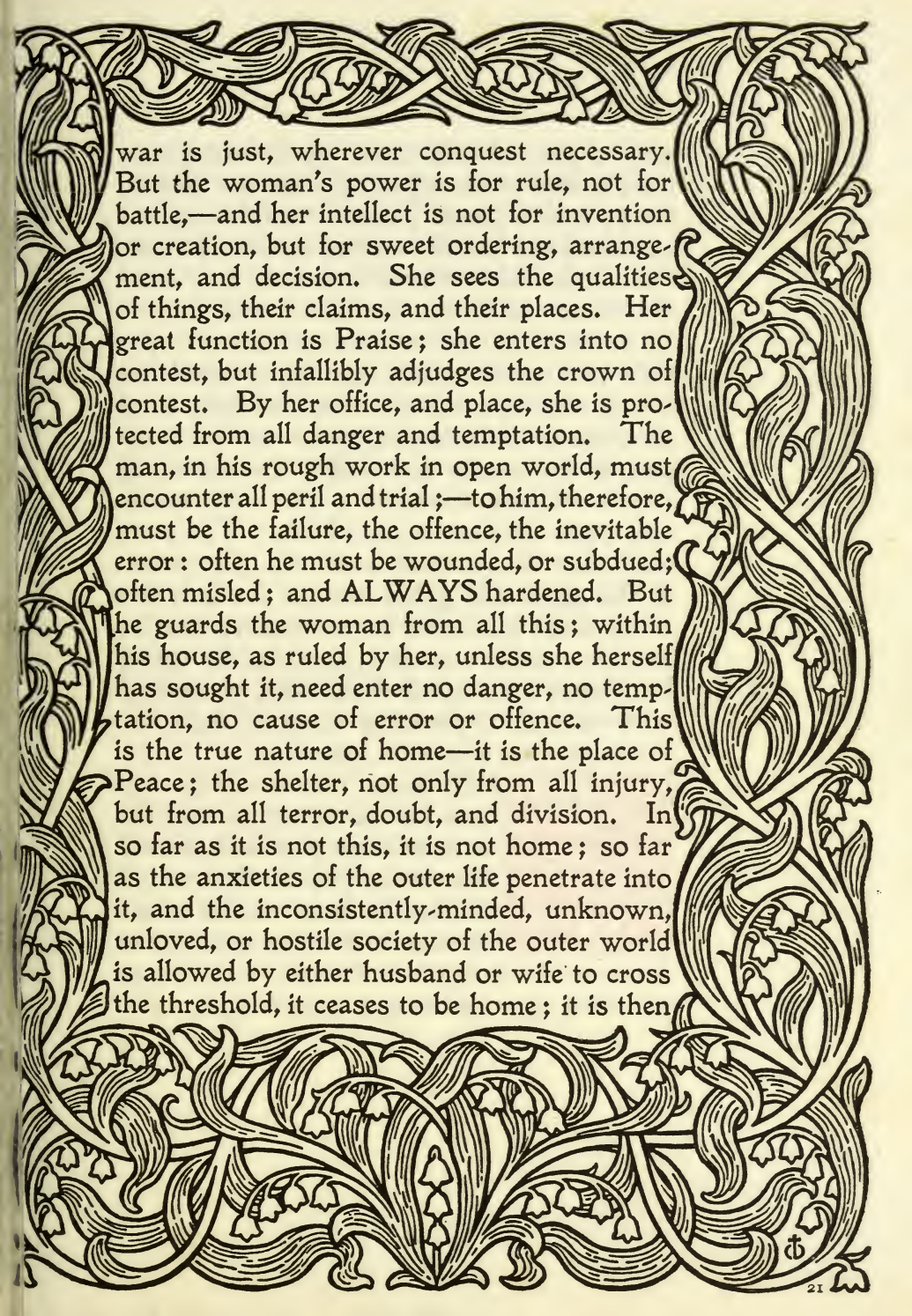
THUS much, then, respecting the relations of lovers I believe you will accept. But what we too often doubt is the fitness of the continuance of such a relation throughout the whole of human life. We think it right in the lover and mistress, not in the husband and wife. That is to say, we think that a reverent and tender duty is due to one whose affection we still doubt, and whose character we as yet do but partially and distantly discern; and that this reverence and duty are to be withdrawn when the affection has become wholly and limitlessly our own, and the character has been so sifted and tried that we fear not to entrust it with the happiness of our lives. Do you not see how ignoble this is, as well as how unreasonable? Do you not feel that marriage,—when it is



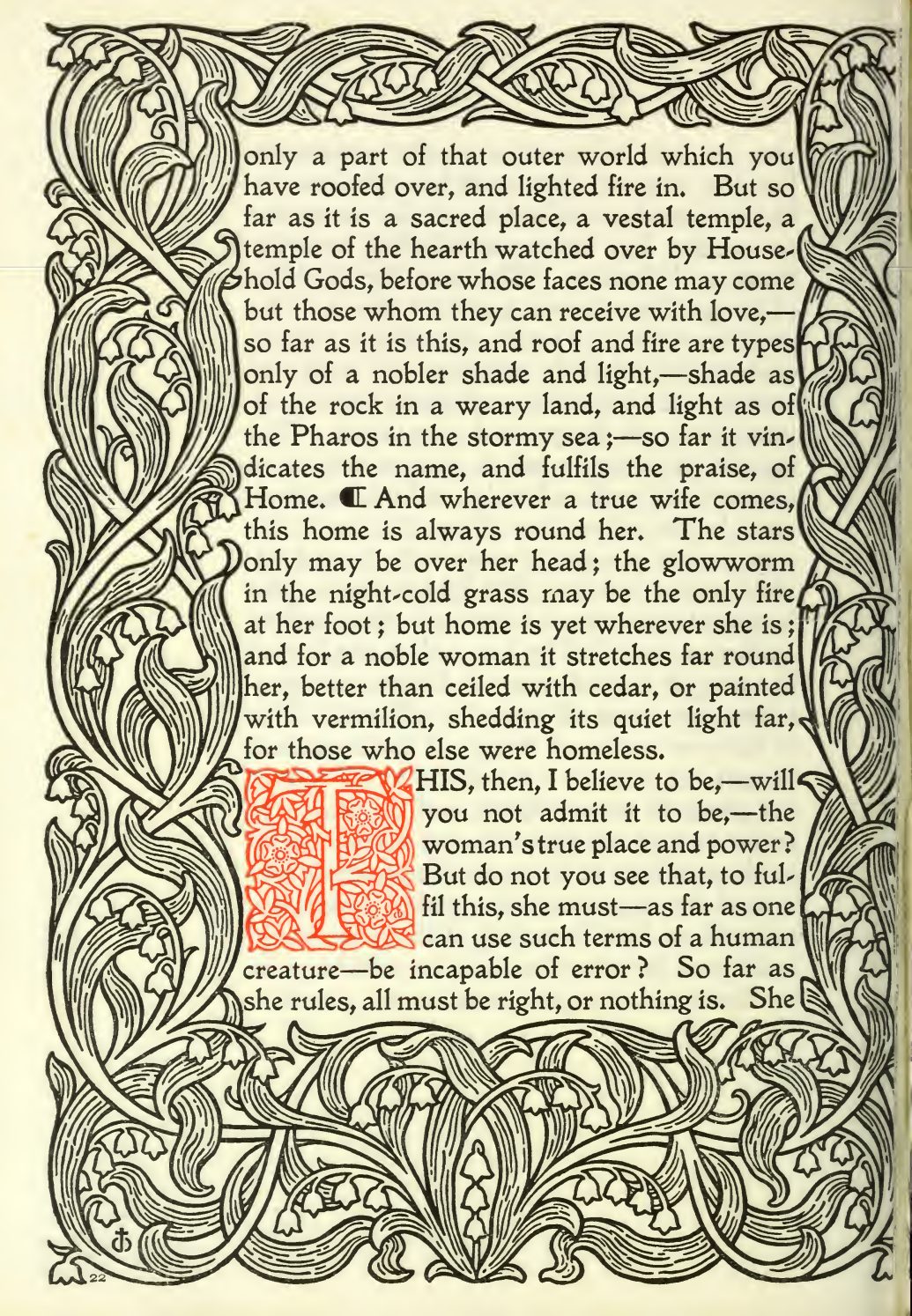
marriage at all,—is only the seal which marks the vowed transition of temporary into untiring service, and of fitful into eternal love?

BUT how, you will ask, is the idea of this guiding function of the woman reconcilable with a true wifely subjection? Simply in that it is a GUIDING, not a determining, function. Let me try to show you briefly how these powers seem to be rightly distinguishable. ¶ We are foolish, and without excuse foolish, in speaking of the “superiority” of one sex to the other, as if they could be compared in similar things. Each has what the other has not: each completes the other, and is completed by the other: they are in nothing alike, and the happiness and perfection of both depends on each asking and receiving from the other what the other only can give.

NOW their separate characters are briefly these. The man’s power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defender. His intellect is for speculation and invention; his energy for adventure, for war, and for conquest, wherever

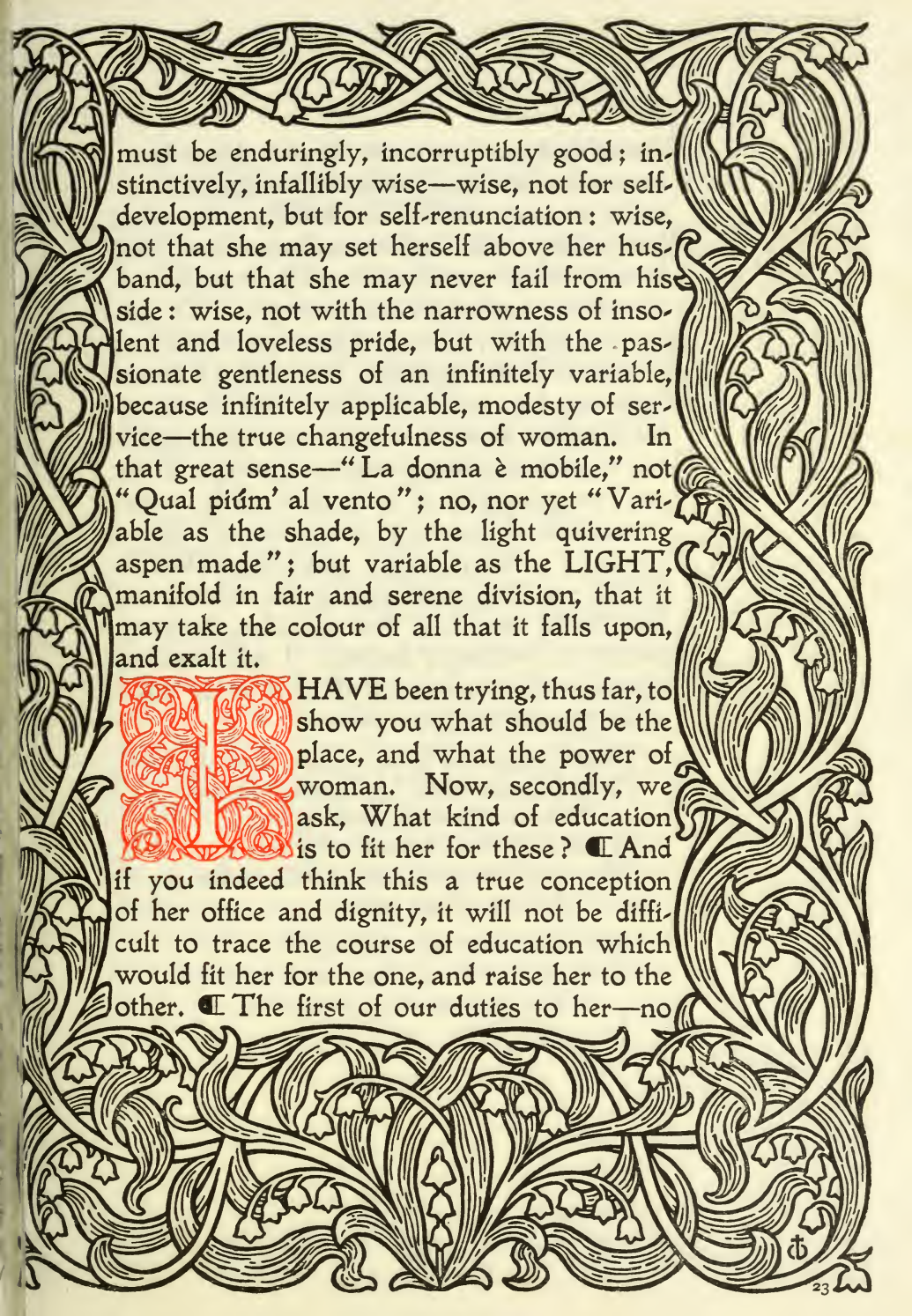
A highly detailed decorative border surrounds the text. It features intricate, symmetrical patterns of stylized leaves, vines, and small bell-shaped flowers. The design is reminiscent of the Arts and Crafts movement, with fine lines and a sense of organic growth. The border is composed of repeating motifs that create a rich, textured frame for the central text.

war is just, wherever conquest necessary. But the woman's power is for rule, not for battle,—and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision. She sees the qualities of things, their claims, and their places. Her great function is Praise; she enters into no contest, but infallibly adjudges the crown of contest. By her office, and place, she is protected from all danger and temptation. The man, in his rough work in open world, must encounter all peril and trial;—to him, therefore, must be the failure, the offence, the inevitable error: often he must be wounded, or subdued; often misled; and ALWAYS hardened. But he guards the woman from all this; within his house, as ruled by her, unless she herself has sought it, need enter no danger, no temptation, no cause of error or offence. This is the true nature of home—it is the place of Peace; the shelter, not only from all injury, but from all terror, doubt, and division. In so far as it is not this, it is not home; so far as the anxieties of the outer life penetrate into it, and the inconsistently-minded, unknown, unloved, or hostile society of the outer world is allowed by either husband or wife to cross the threshold, it ceases to be home; it is then



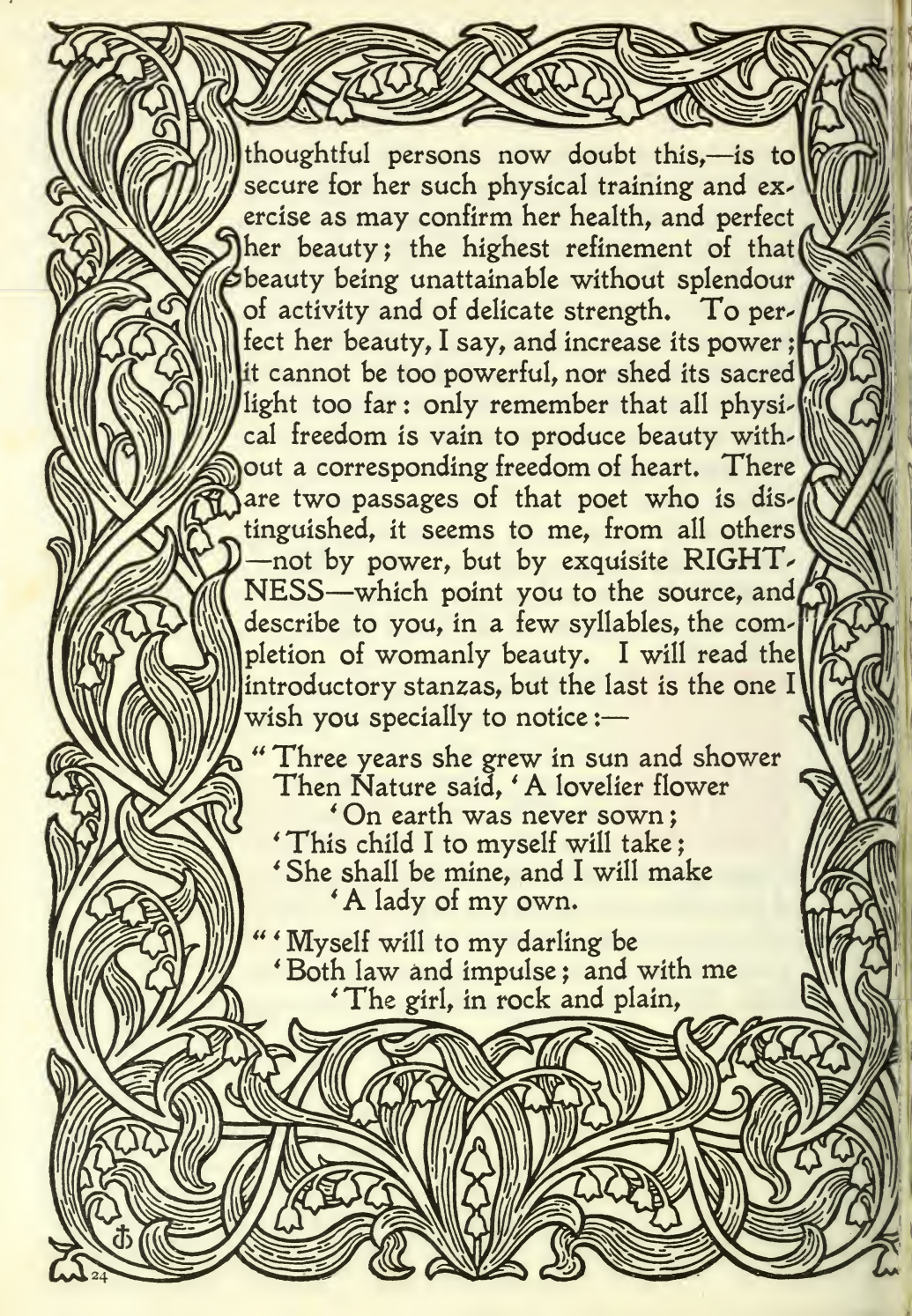
only a part of that outer world which you have roofed over, and lighted fire in. But so far as it is a sacred place, a vestal temple, a temple of the hearth watched over by Household Gods, before whose faces none may come but those whom they can receive with love,—so far as it is this, and roof and fire are types only of a nobler shade and light,—shade as of the rock in a weary land, and light as of the Pharos in the stormy sea;—so far it vindicates the name, and fulfils the praise, of Home. ¶ And wherever a true wife comes, this home is always round her. The stars only may be over her head; the glowworm in the night-cold grass may be the only fire at her foot; but home is yet wherever she is; and for a noble woman it stretches far round her, better than ceiled with cedar, or painted with vermilion, shedding its quiet light far, for those who else were homeless.

THIS, then, I believe to be,—will you not admit it to be,—the woman's true place and power? But do not you see that, to fulfil this, she must—as far as one can use such terms of a human creature—be incapable of error? So far as she rules, all must be right, or nothing is. She

A dense, intricate decorative border in a black and white Art Nouveau style surrounds the text. It features flowing, symmetrical lines that form stylized leaves, vines, and small bell-shaped flowers. The border is particularly thick at the top and bottom, framing the central text area.

must be enduringly, incorruptibly good; instinctively, infallibly wise—wise, not for self-development, but for self-renunciation: wise, not that she may set herself above her husband, but that she may never fail from his side: wise, not with the narrowness of insolent and loveless pride, but with the passionate gentleness of an infinitely variable, because infinitely applicable, modesty of service—the true changefulness of woman. In that great sense—“*La donna è mobile,*” not “*Qual piúm’ al vento*”; no, nor yet “*Variable as the shade, by the light quivering aspen made*”; but variable as the LIGHT, manifold in fair and serene division, that it may take the colour of all that it falls upon, and exalt it.

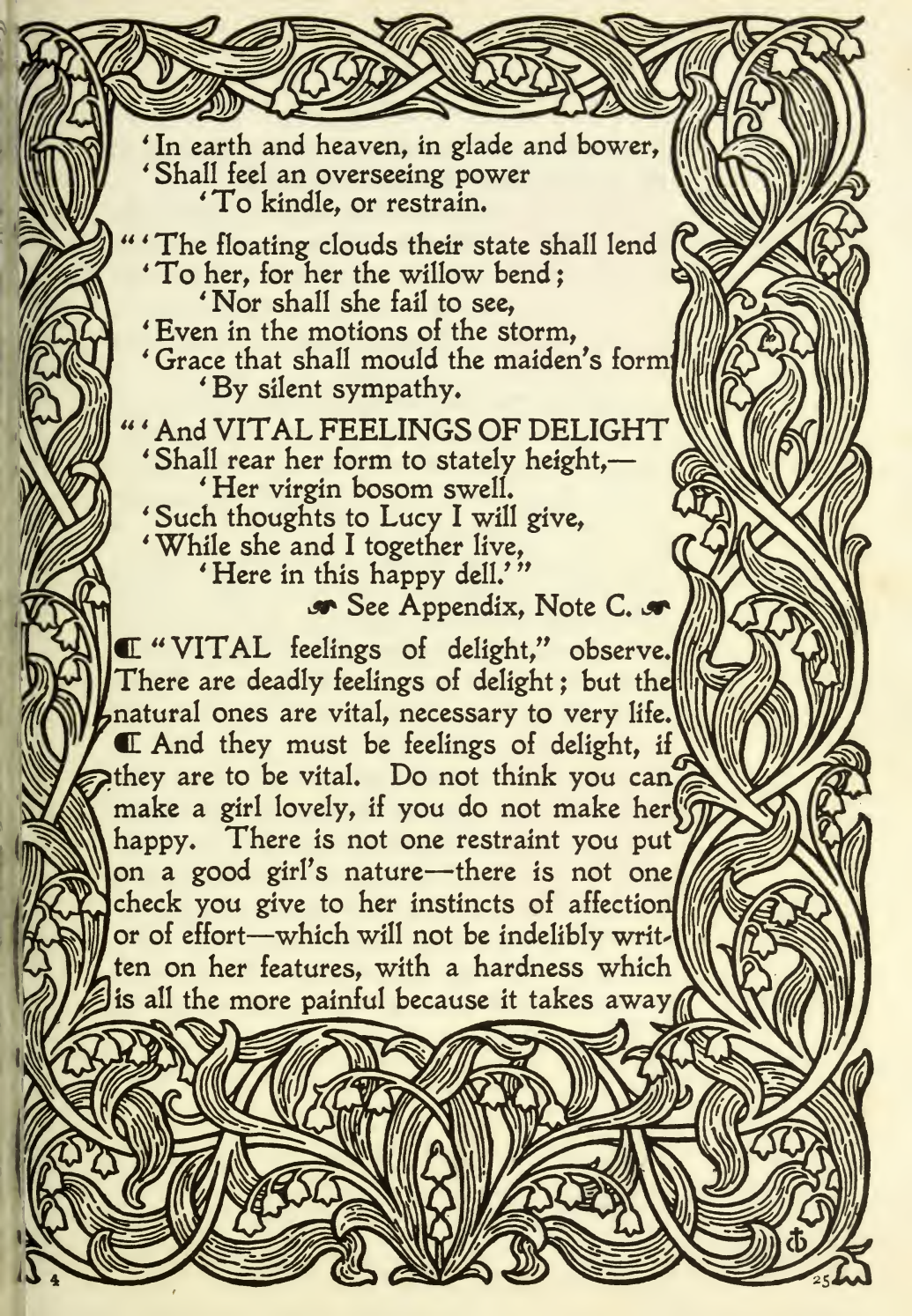
I HAVE been trying, thus far, to show you what should be the place, and what the power of woman. Now, secondly, we ask, What kind of education is to fit her for these? ¶ And if you indeed think this a true conception of her office and dignity, it will not be difficult to trace the course of education which would fit her for the one, and raise her to the other. ¶ The first of our duties to her—no

A highly detailed decorative border in a Celtic or Art Nouveau style, featuring intricate knotwork, stylized leaves, and floral motifs. The border frames the central text on all sides.

thoughtful persons now doubt this,—is to secure for her such physical training and exercise as may confirm her health, and perfect her beauty; the highest refinement of that beauty being unattainable without splendour of activity and of delicate strength. To perfect her beauty, I say, and increase its power; it cannot be too powerful, nor shed its sacred light too far: only remember that all physical freedom is vain to produce beauty without a corresponding freedom of heart. There are two passages of that poet who is distinguished, it seems to me, from all others—not by power, but by exquisite RIGHTNESS—which point you to the source, and describe to you, in a few syllables, the completion of womanly beauty. I will read the introductory stanzas, but the last is the one I wish you specially to notice:—

“ Three years she grew in sun and shower
Then Nature said, ‘ A lovelier flower
‘ On earth was never sown;
‘ This child I to myself will take;
‘ She shall be mine, and I will make
‘ A lady of my own.

“ ‘ Myself will to my darling be
‘ Both law and impulse; and with me
‘ The girl, in rock and plain,



' In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
' Shall feel an overseeing power
' To kindle, or restrain.

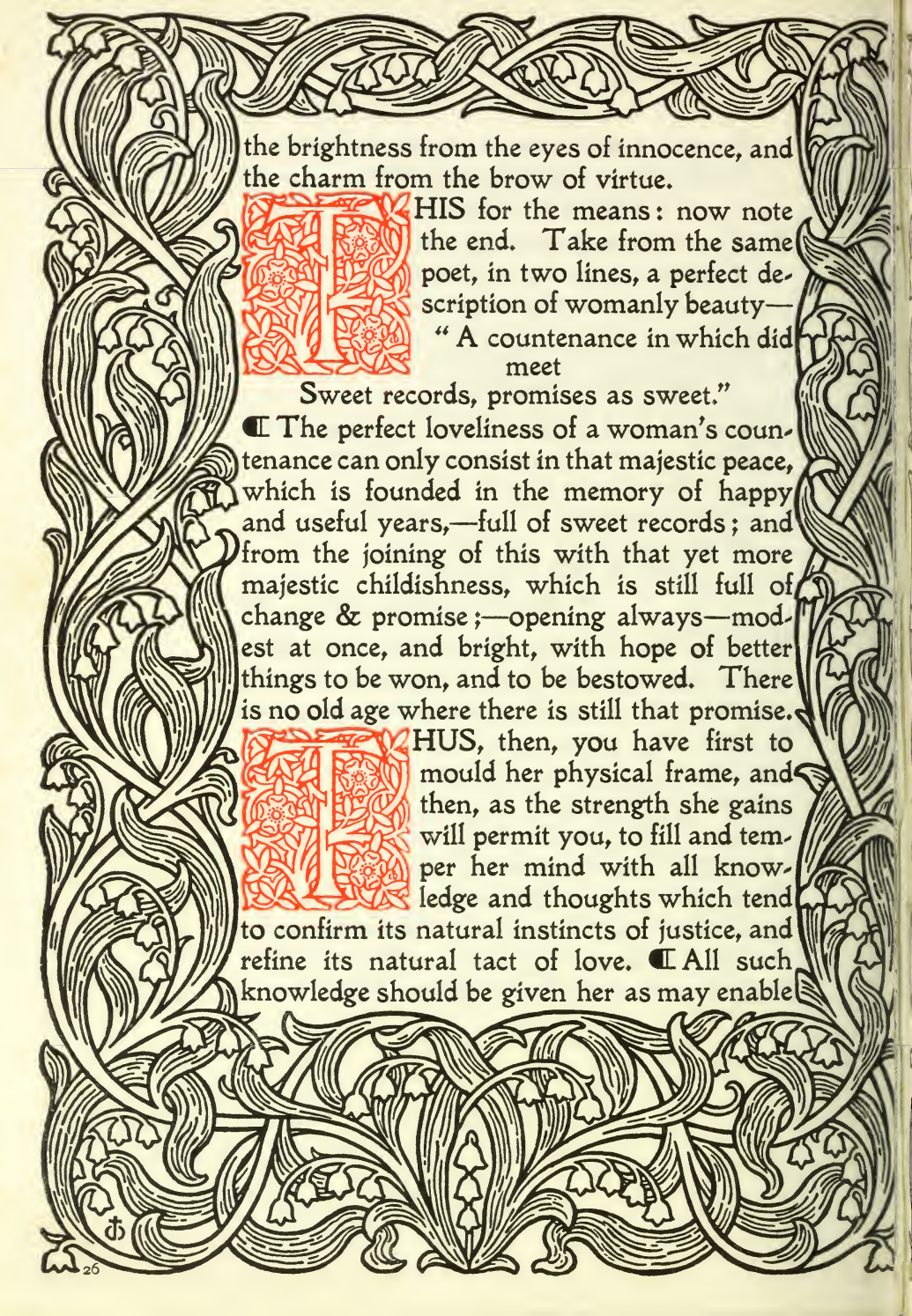
“ ‘ The floating clouds their state shall lend
' To her, for her the willow bend ;
' Nor shall she fail to see,
' Even in the motions of the storm,
' Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
' By silent sympathy.

“ ‘ And VITAL FEELINGS OF DELIGHT
' Shall rear her form to stately height,—
' Her virgin bosom swell.
' Such thoughts to Lucy I will give,
' While she and I together live,
' Here in this happy dell.’ ”

☛ See Appendix, Note C. ☛

☐ “ VITAL feelings of delight,” observe. There are deadly feelings of delight ; but the natural ones are vital, necessary to very life.

☐ And they must be feelings of delight, if they are to be vital. Do not think you can make a girl lovely, if you do not make her happy. There is not one restraint you put on a good girl's nature—there is not one check you give to her instincts of affection or of effort—which will not be indelibly written on her features, with a hardness which is all the more painful because it takes away

A highly detailed decorative border in a black and white Art Nouveau style, featuring intricate floral and leaf patterns that frame the text. The border is composed of repeating motifs of stylized leaves and flowers, creating a dense, woven appearance.

the brightness from the eyes of innocence, and
the charm from the brow of virtue.

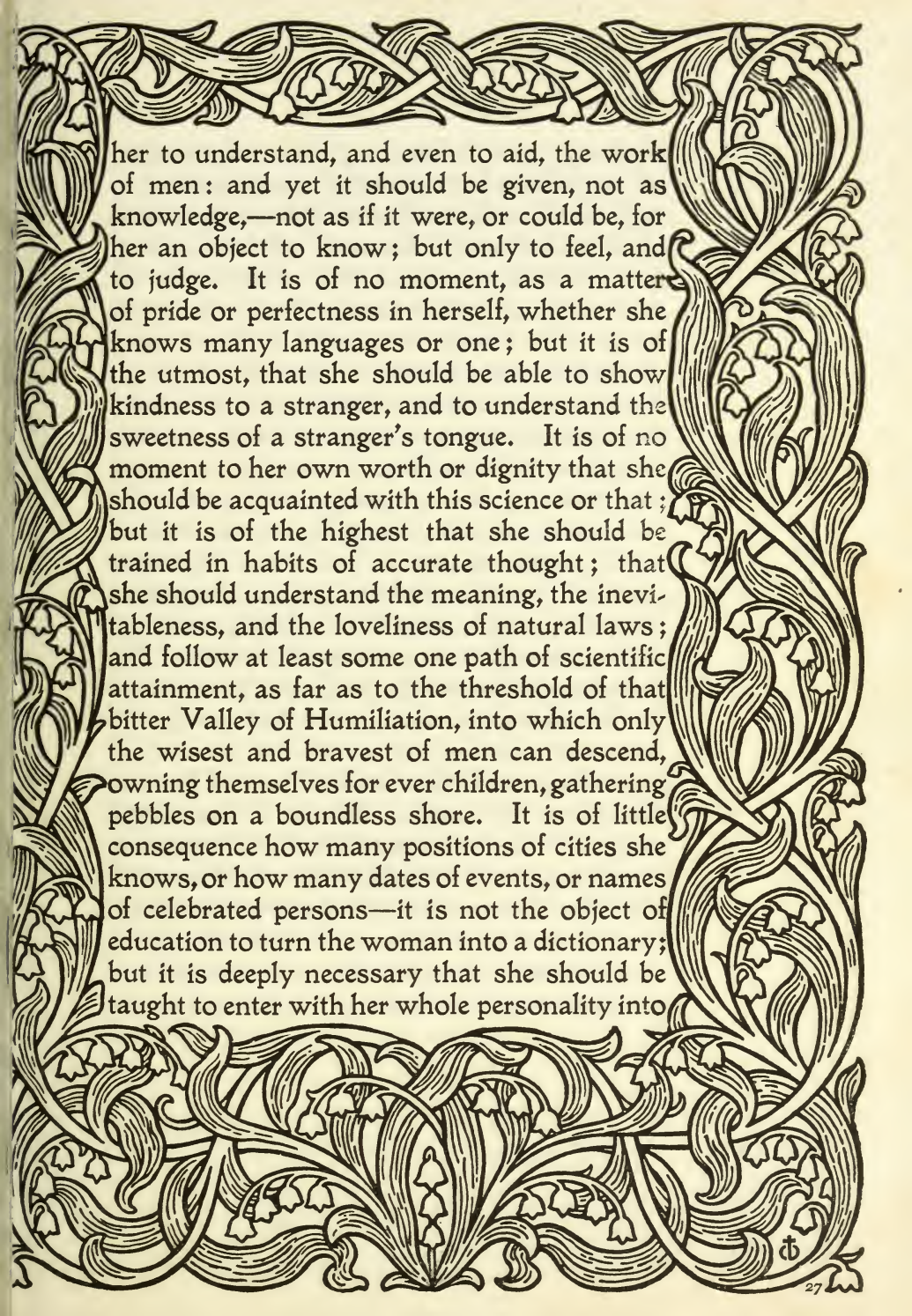
THIS for the means: now note
the end. Take from the same
poet, in two lines, a perfect de-
scription of womanly beauty—

“ A countenance in which did
meet

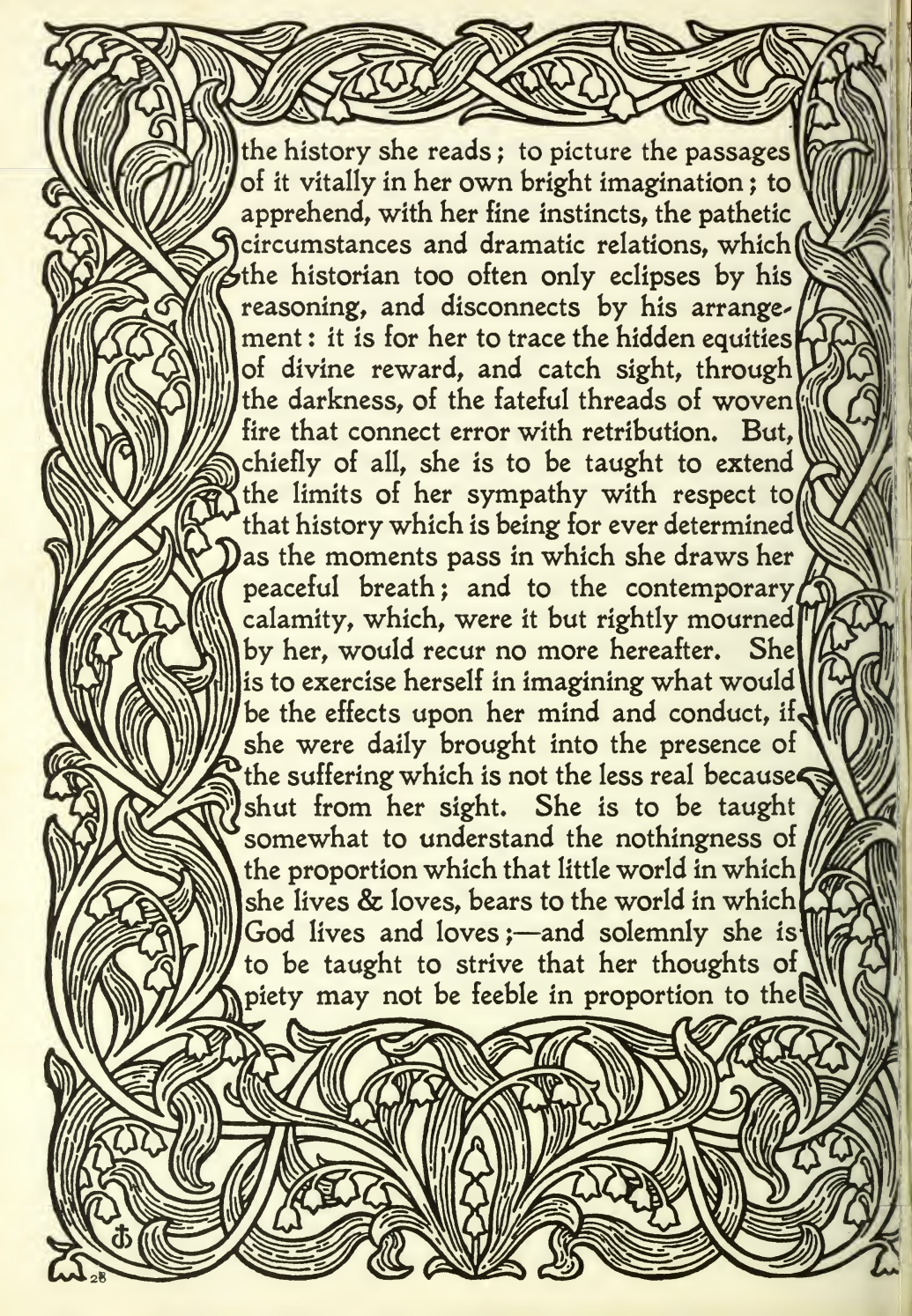
Sweet records, promises as sweet.”

☐ The perfect loveliness of a woman's coun-
tenance can only consist in that majestic peace,
which is founded in the memory of happy
and useful years,—full of sweet records; and
from the joining of this with that yet more
majestic childishness, which is still full of
change & promise;—opening always—mod-
est at once, and bright, with hope of better
things to be won, and to be bestowed. There
is no old age where there is still that promise.

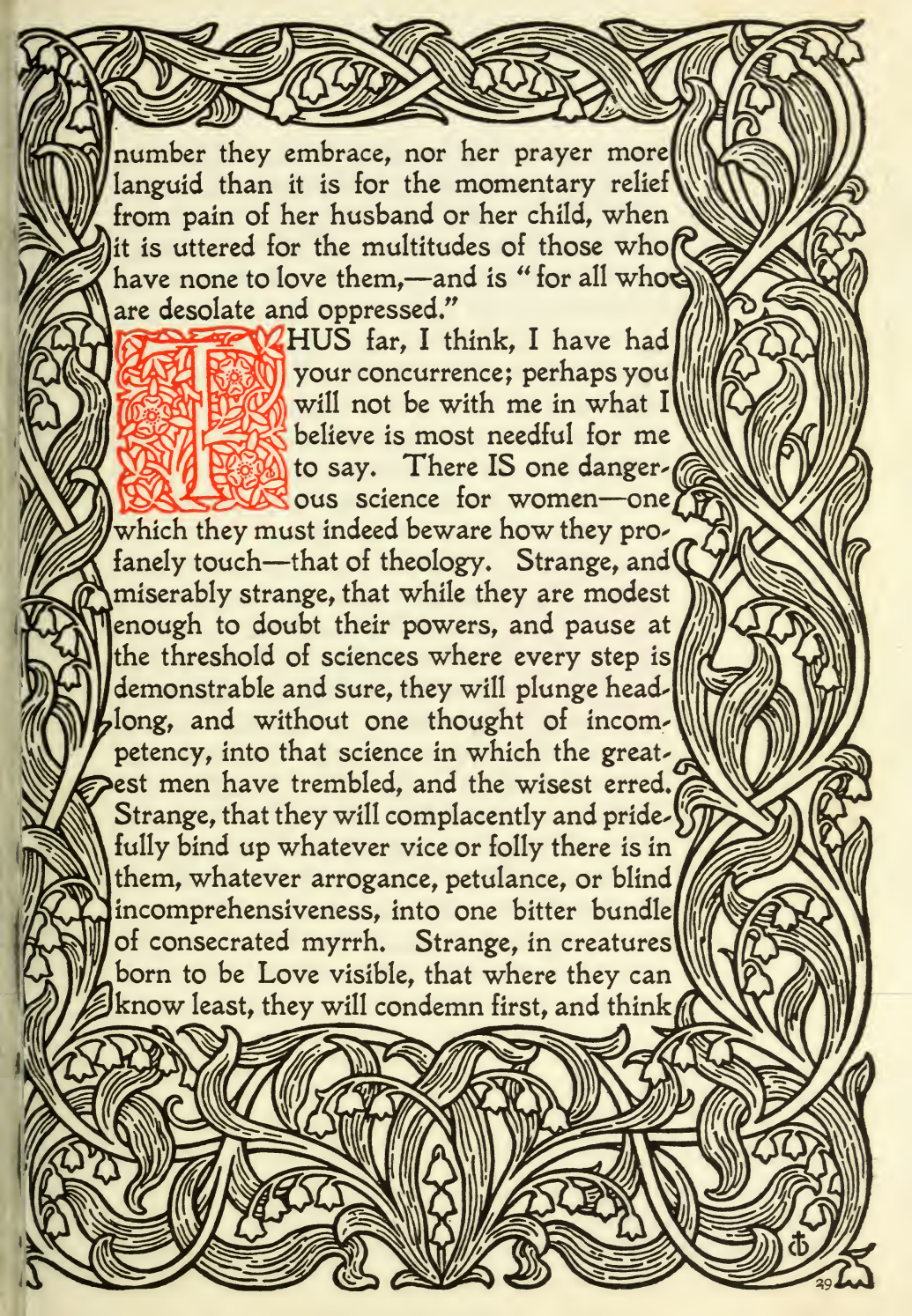
THUS, then, you have first to
mould her physical frame, and
then, as the strength she gains
will permit you, to fill and tem-
per her mind with all know-
ledge and thoughts which tend
to confirm its natural instincts of justice, and
refine its natural tact of love. ☐ All such
knowledge should be given her as may enable

A highly detailed decorative border in a black and white Art Nouveau style. It features intricate, flowing lines that form stylized floral and leaf patterns. The design is symmetrical and fills the entire page, framing the central text. The motifs include long, sweeping curves, pointed leaves, and small, bell-shaped flowers. The overall effect is one of organic complexity and elegant craftsmanship.

her to understand, and even to aid, the work of men: and yet it should be given, not as knowledge,—not as if it were, or could be, for her an object to know; but only to feel, and to judge. It is of no moment, as a matter of pride or perfectness in herself, whether she knows many languages or one; but it is of the utmost, that she should be able to show kindness to a stranger, and to understand the sweetness of a stranger's tongue. It is of no moment to her own worth or dignity that she should be acquainted with this science or that; but it is of the highest that she should be trained in habits of accurate thought; that she should understand the meaning, the inevitableness, and the loveliness of natural laws; and follow at least some one path of scientific attainment, as far as to the threshold of that bitter Valley of Humiliation, into which only the wisest and bravest of men can descend, owning themselves for ever children, gathering pebbles on a boundless shore. It is of little consequence how many positions of cities she knows, or how many dates of events, or names of celebrated persons—it is not the object of education to turn the woman into a dictionary; but it is deeply necessary that she should be taught to enter with her whole personality into

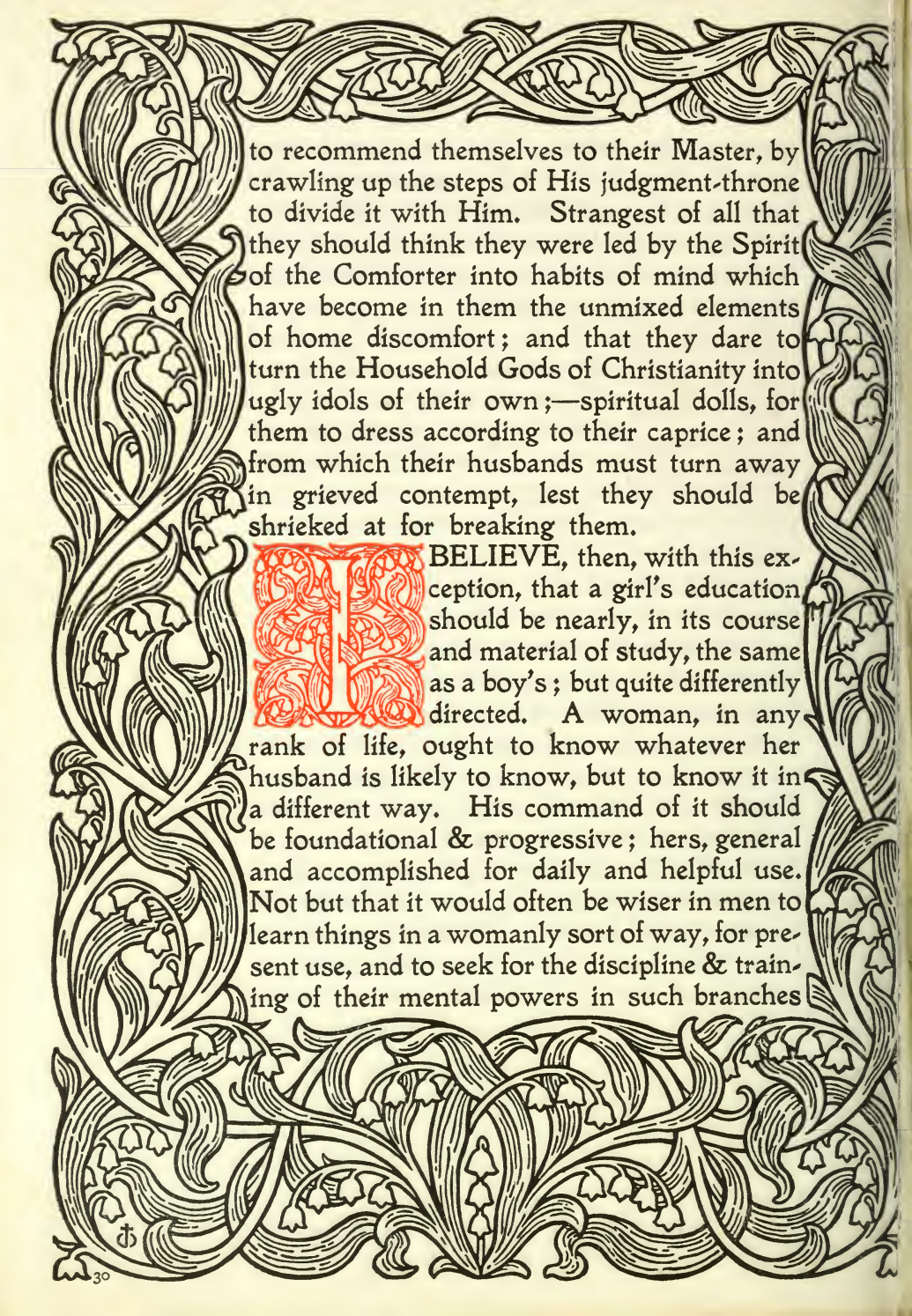


the history she reads ; to picture the passages of it vitally in her own bright imagination ; to apprehend, with her fine instincts, the pathetic circumstances and dramatic relations, which the historian too often only eclipses by his reasoning, and disconnects by his arrangement : it is for her to trace the hidden equities of divine reward, and catch sight, through the darkness, of the fateful threads of woven fire that connect error with retribution. But, chiefly of all, she is to be taught to extend the limits of her sympathy with respect to that history which is being for ever determined as the moments pass in which she draws her peaceful breath ; and to the contemporary calamity, which, were it but rightly mourned by her, would recur no more hereafter. She is to exercise herself in imagining what would be the effects upon her mind and conduct, if she were daily brought into the presence of the suffering which is not the less real because shut from her sight. She is to be taught somewhat to understand the nothingness of the proportion which that little world in which she lives & loves, bears to the world in which God lives and loves ;—and solemnly she is to be taught to strive that her thoughts of piety may not be feeble in proportion to the

A highly detailed Art Nouveau decorative border surrounds the text. It features intricate, symmetrical floral and foliate patterns, including stylized leaves, flowers, and scrolling vines. The design is dense and fills the entire page area.

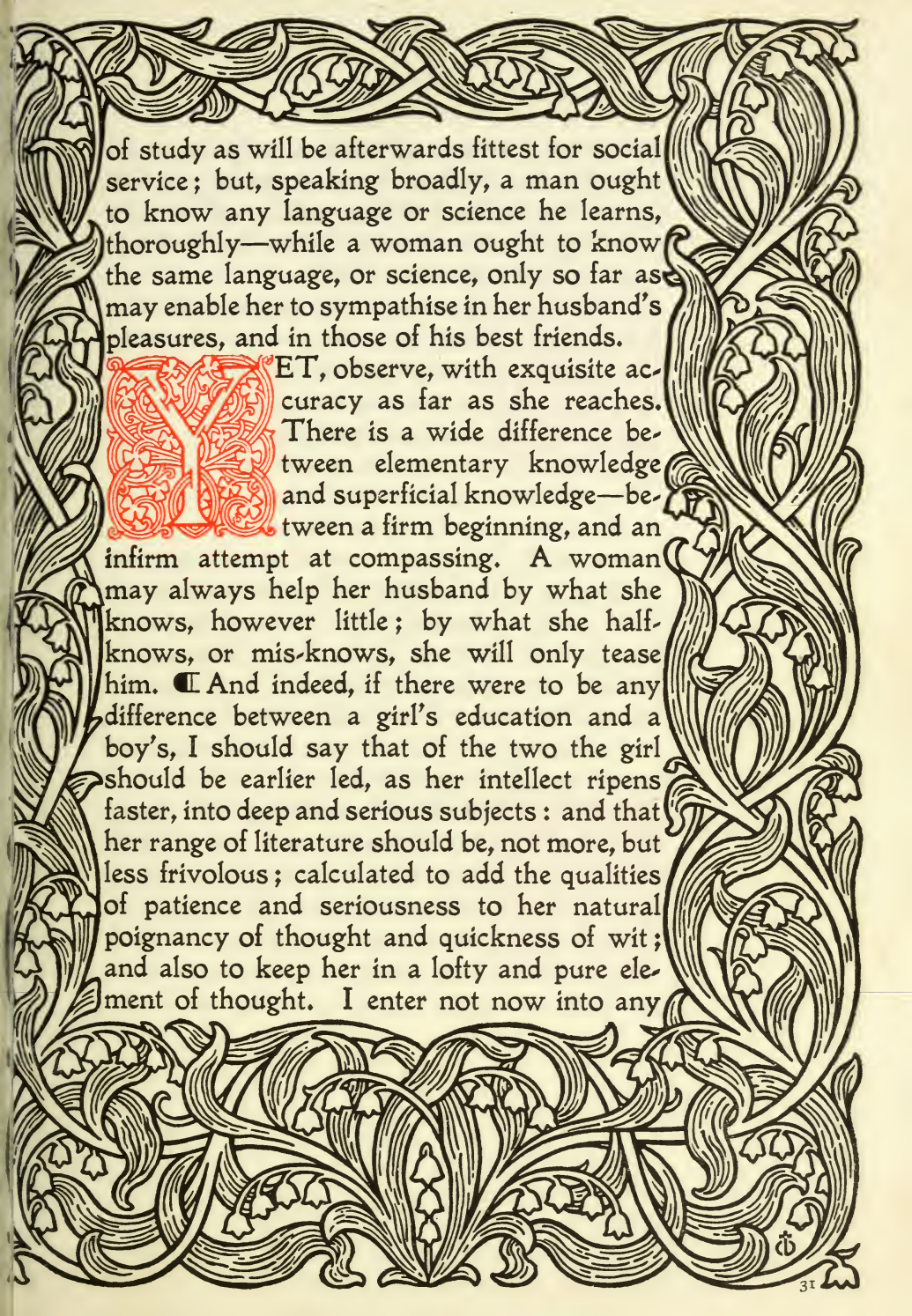
number they embrace, nor her prayer more languid than it is for the momentary relief from pain of her husband or her child, when it is uttered for the multitudes of those who have none to love them,—and is “for all who are desolate and oppressed.”

THUS far, I think, I have had your concurrence; perhaps you will not be with me in what I believe is most needful for me to say. There IS one dangerous science for women—one which they must indeed beware how they profanely touch—that of theology. Strange, and miserably strange, that while they are modest enough to doubt their powers, and pause at the threshold of sciences where every step is demonstrable and sure, they will plunge headlong, and without one thought of incompetency, into that science in which the greatest men have trembled, and the wisest erred. Strange, that they will complacently and proudly bind up whatever vice or folly there is in them, whatever arrogance, petulance, or blind incomprehensiveness, into one bitter bundle of consecrated myrrh. Strange, in creatures born to be Love visible, that where they can know least, they will condemn first, and think



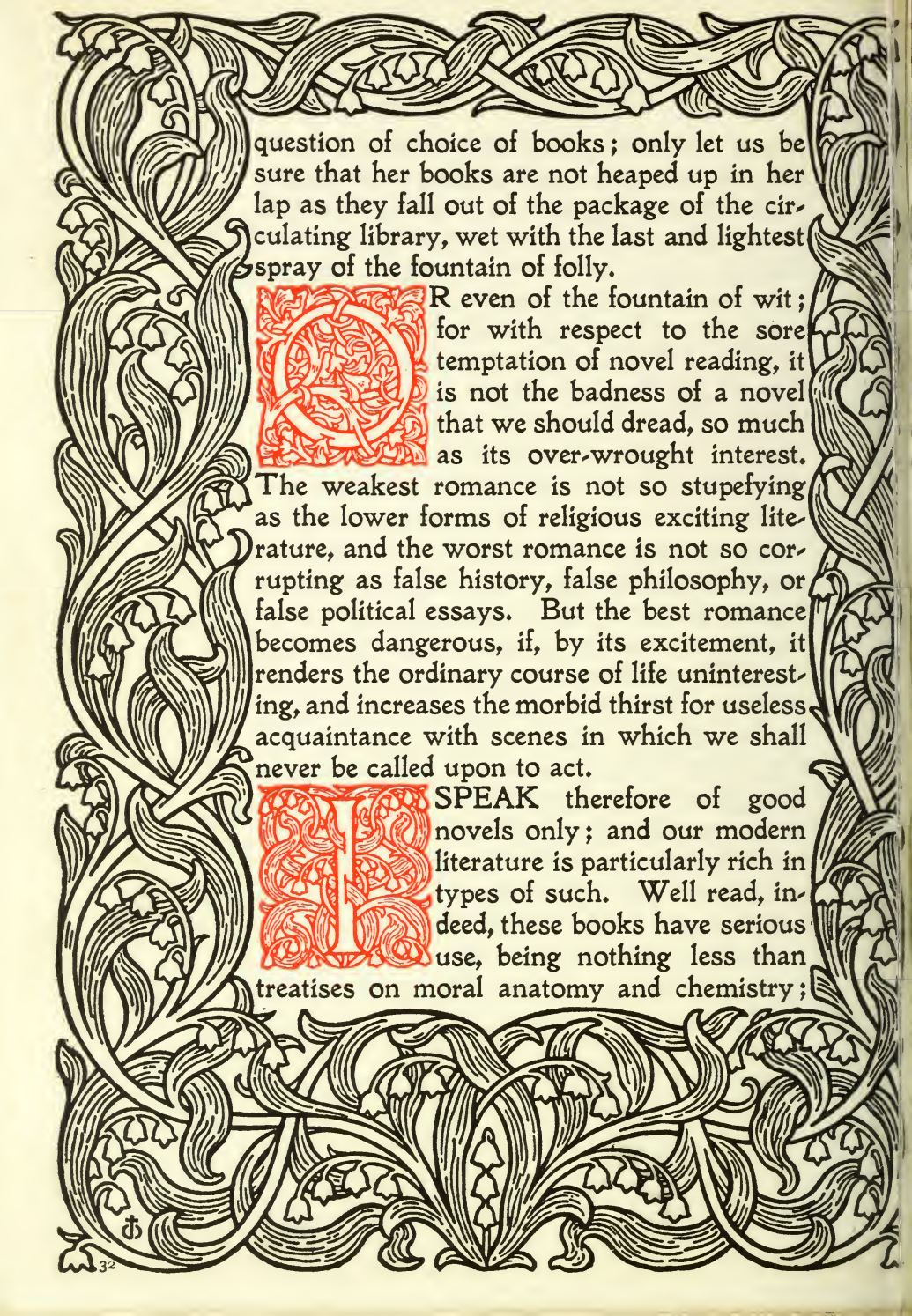
to recommend themselves to their Master, by crawling up the steps of His judgment-throne to divide it with Him. Strangest of all that they should think they were led by the Spirit of the Comforter into habits of mind which have become in them the unmixed elements of home discomfort; and that they dare to turn the Household Gods of Christianity into ugly idols of their own;—spiritual dolls, for them to dress according to their caprice; and from which their husbands must turn away in grieved contempt, lest they should be shrieked at for breaking them.

BELIEVE, then, with this exception, that a girl's education should be nearly, in its course and material of study, the same as a boy's; but quite differently directed. A woman, in any rank of life, ought to know whatever her husband is likely to know, but to know it in a different way. His command of it should be foundational & progressive; hers, general and accomplished for daily and helpful use. Not but that it would often be wiser in men to learn things in a womanly sort of way, for present use, and to seek for the discipline & training of their mental powers in such branches

A highly detailed decorative border in a black and white Art Nouveau style. It features intricate, flowing lines that form stylized floral and leaf patterns, framing the text on all sides. The design is dense and symmetrical, with a central vertical axis.

of study as will be afterwards fittest for social service; but, speaking broadly, a man ought to know any language or science he learns, thoroughly—while a woman ought to know the same language, or science, only so far as may enable her to sympathise in her husband's pleasures, and in those of his best friends.

YET, observe, with exquisite accuracy as far as she reaches. There is a wide difference between elementary knowledge and superficial knowledge—between a firm beginning, and an infirm attempt at compassing. A woman may always help her husband by what she knows, however little; by what she half-knows, or mis-knows, she will only tease him. ¶ And indeed, if there were to be any difference between a girl's education and a boy's, I should say that of the two the girl should be earlier led, as her intellect ripens faster, into deep and serious subjects: and that her range of literature should be, not more, but less frivolous; calculated to add the qualities of patience and seriousness to her natural poignancy of thought and quickness of wit; and also to keep her in a lofty and pure element of thought. I enter not now into any



question of choice of books; only let us be sure that her books are not heaped up in her lap as they fall out of the package of the circulating library, wet with the last and lightest spray of the fountain of folly.

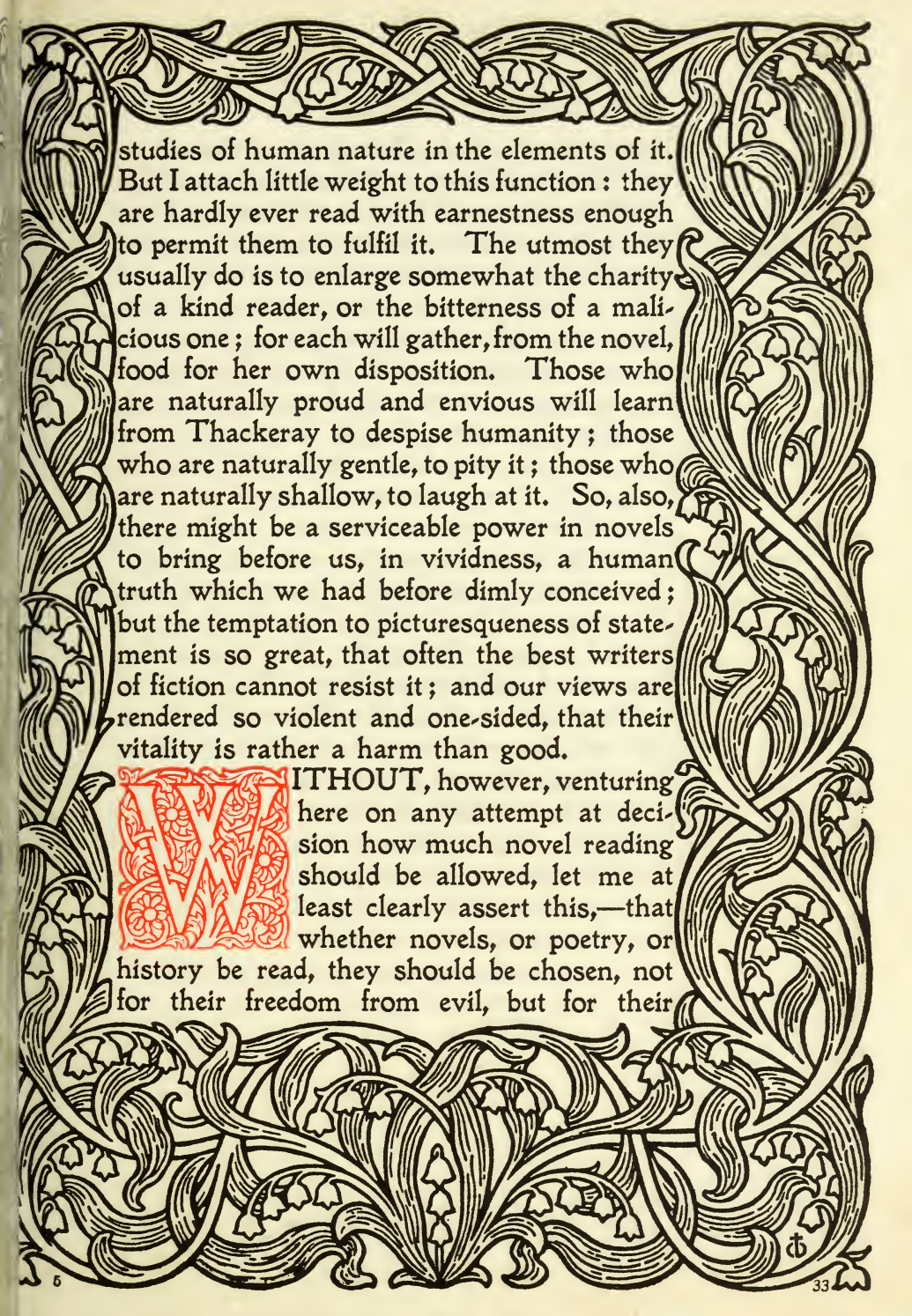


R even of the fountain of wit; for with respect to the sore temptation of novel reading, it is not the badness of a novel that we should dread, so much as its over-wrought interest.

The weakest romance is not so stupefying as the lower forms of religious exciting literature, and the worst romance is not so corrupting as false history, false philosophy, or false political essays. But the best romance becomes dangerous, if, by its excitement, it renders the ordinary course of life uninteresting, and increases the morbid thirst for useless acquaintance with scenes in which we shall never be called upon to act.



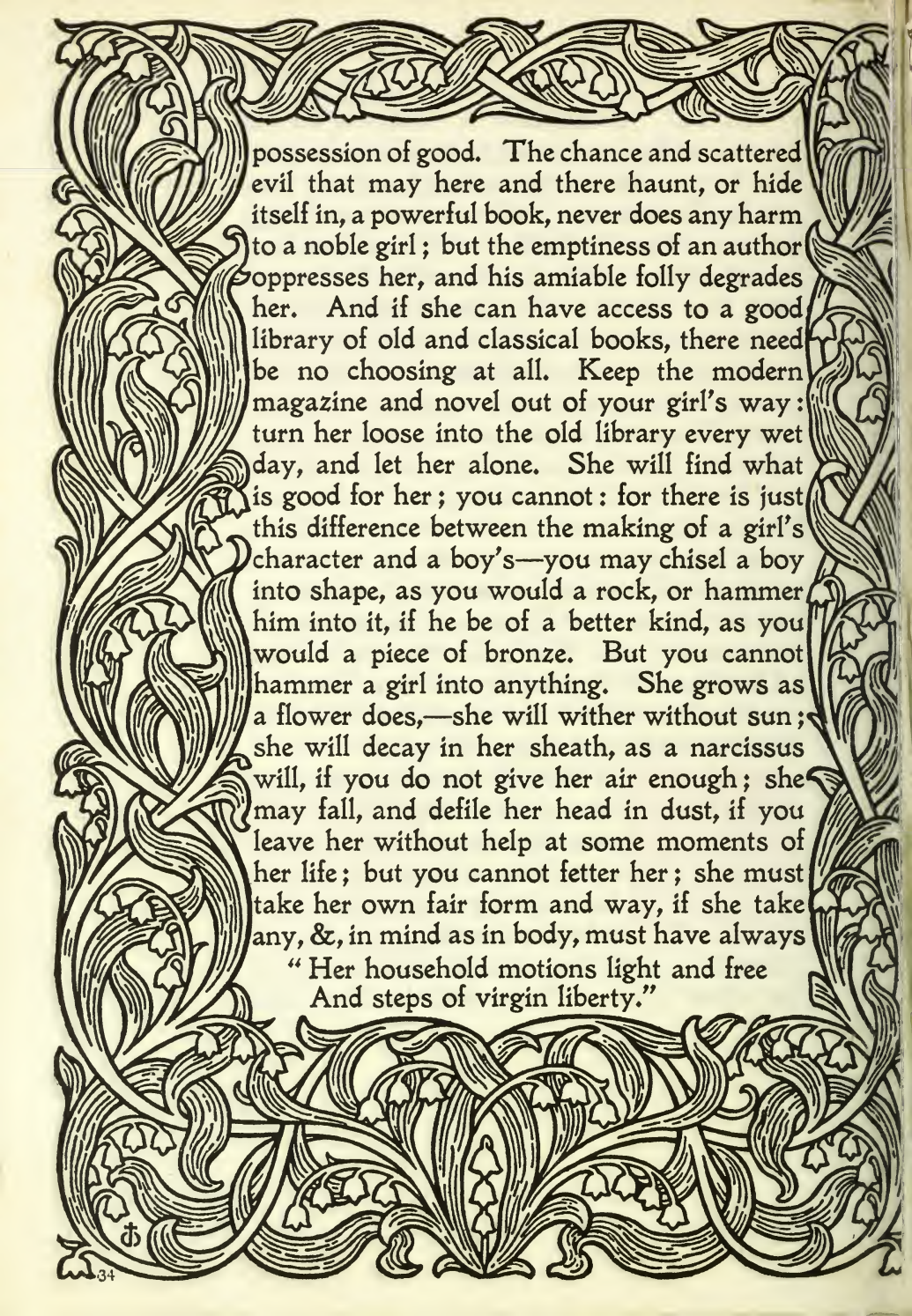
SPEAK therefore of good novels only; and our modern literature is particularly rich in types of such. Well read, indeed, these books have serious use, being nothing less than treatises on moral anatomy and chemistry;



studies of human nature in the elements of it. But I attach little weight to this function : they are hardly ever read with earnestness enough to permit them to fulfil it. The utmost they usually do is to enlarge somewhat the charity of a kind reader, or the bitterness of a malicious one ; for each will gather, from the novel, food for her own disposition. Those who are naturally proud and envious will learn from Thackeray to despise humanity ; those who are naturally gentle, to pity it ; those who are naturally shallow, to laugh at it. So, also, there might be a serviceable power in novels to bring before us, in vividness, a human truth which we had before dimly conceived ; but the temptation to picturesqueness of statement is so great, that often the best writers of fiction cannot resist it ; and our views are rendered so violent and one-sided, that their vitality is rather a harm than good.

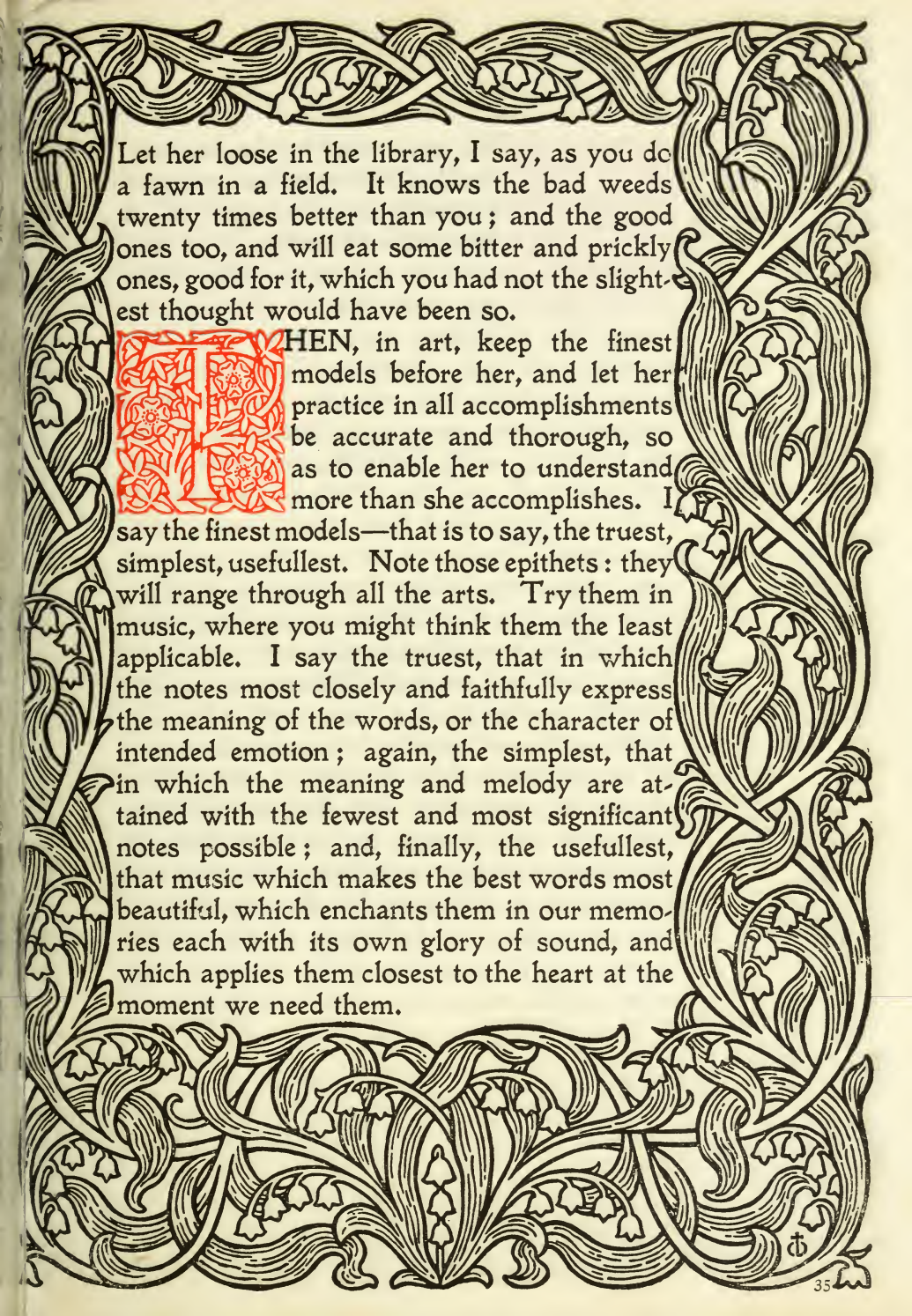
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WITHOUT, however, venturing here on any attempt at decision how much novel reading should be allowed, let me at least clearly assert this,—that whether novels, or poetry, or history be read, they should be chosen, not for their freedom from evil, but for their

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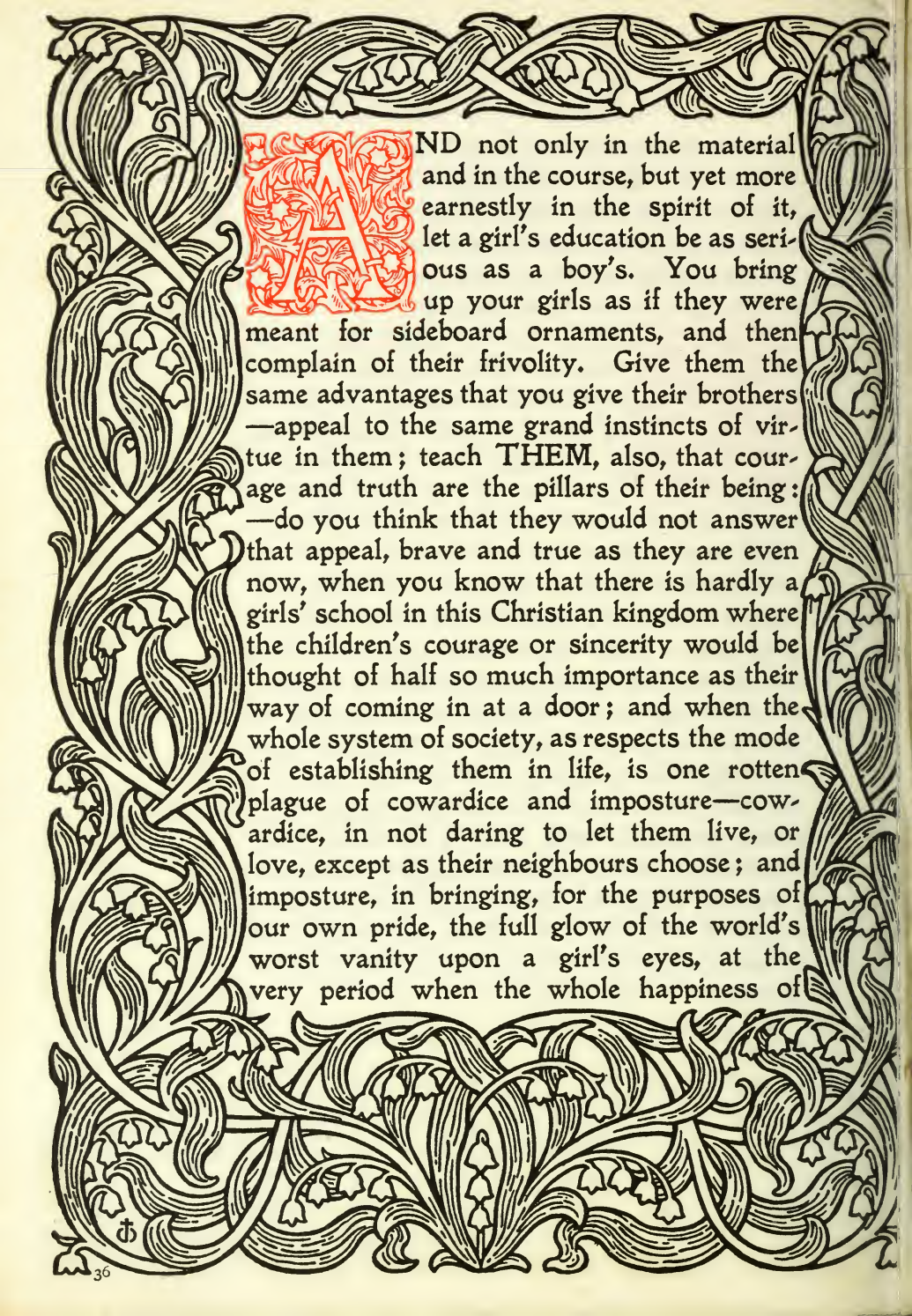
possession of good. The chance and scattered evil that may here and there haunt, or hide itself in, a powerful book, never does any harm to a noble girl; but the emptiness of an author oppresses her, and his amiable folly degrades her. And if she can have access to a good library of old and classical books, there need be no choosing at all. Keep the modern magazine and novel out of your girl's way: turn her loose into the old library every wet day, and let her alone. She will find what is good for her; you cannot: for there is just this difference between the making of a girl's character and a boy's—you may chisel a boy into shape, as you would a rock, or hammer him into it, if he be of a better kind, as you would a piece of bronze. But you cannot hammer a girl into anything. She grows as a flower does,—she will wither without sun; she will decay in her sheath, as a narcissus will, if you do not give her air enough; she may fall, and defile her head in dust, if you leave her without help at some moments of her life; but you cannot fetter her; she must take her own fair form and way, if she take any, &, in mind as in body, must have always

“ Her household motions light and free
And steps of virgin liberty.”

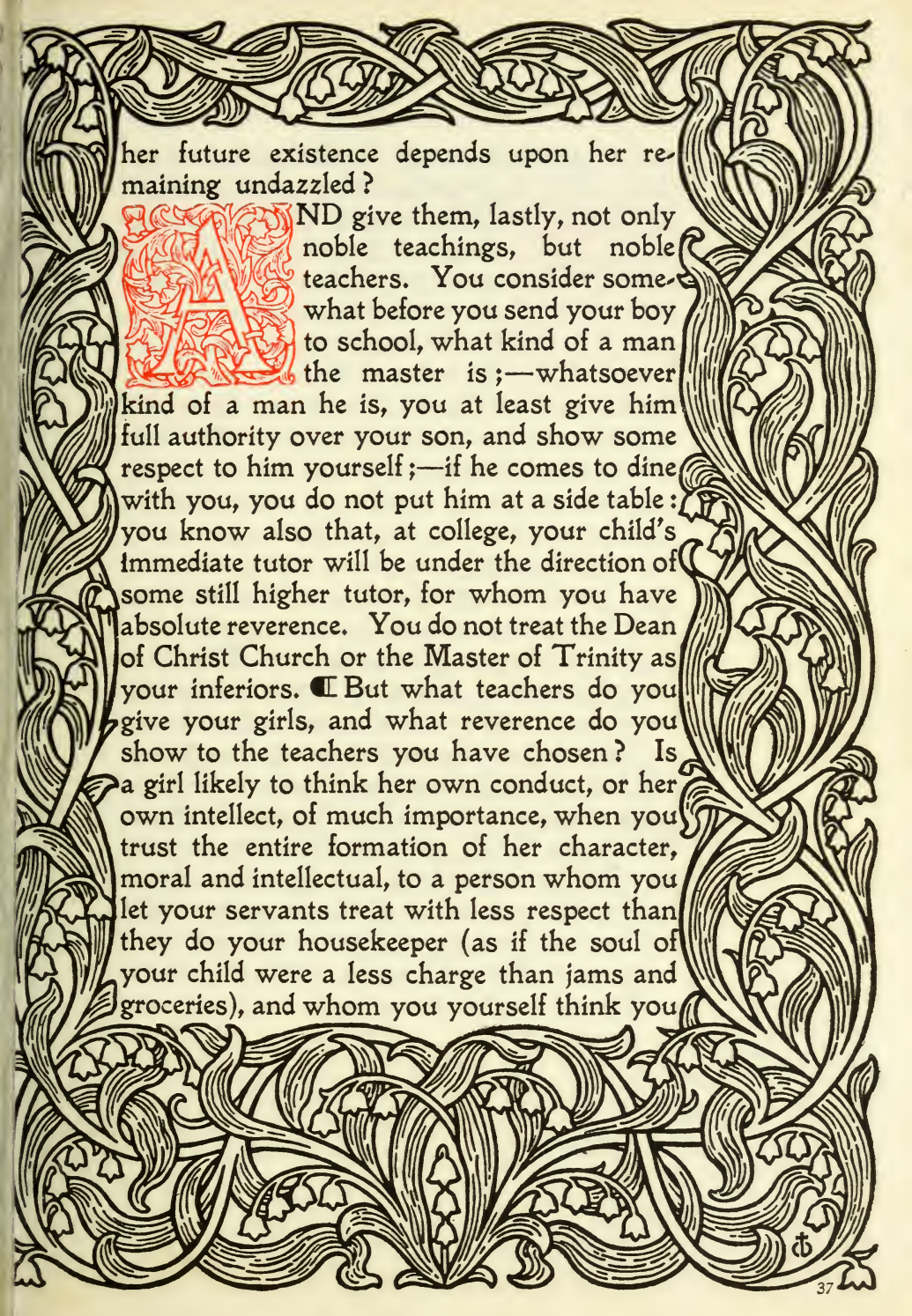
A highly detailed decorative border in a black and white Art Nouveau style. It features intricate, flowing lines that form a complex web of stylized leaves, vines, and floral motifs. The design is symmetrical and fills the entire page, framing the central text. The top and bottom borders are particularly dense, with the bottom border featuring a small circular emblem on the right side.

Let her loose in the library, I say, as you do a fawn in a field. It knows the bad weeds twenty times better than you; and the good ones too, and will eat some bitter and prickly ones, good for it, which you had not the slightest thought would have been so.

THEN, in art, keep the finest models before her, and let her practice in all accomplishments be accurate and thorough, so as to enable her to understand more than she accomplishes. I say the finest models—that is to say, the truest, simplest, usefulest. Note those epithets: they will range through all the arts. Try them in music, where you might think them the least applicable. I say the truest, that in which the notes most closely and faithfully express the meaning of the words, or the character of intended emotion; again, the simplest, that in which the meaning and melody are attained with the fewest and most significant notes possible; and, finally, the usefulest, that music which makes the best words most beautiful, which enchants them in our memories each with its own glory of sound, and which applies them closest to the heart at the moment we need them.

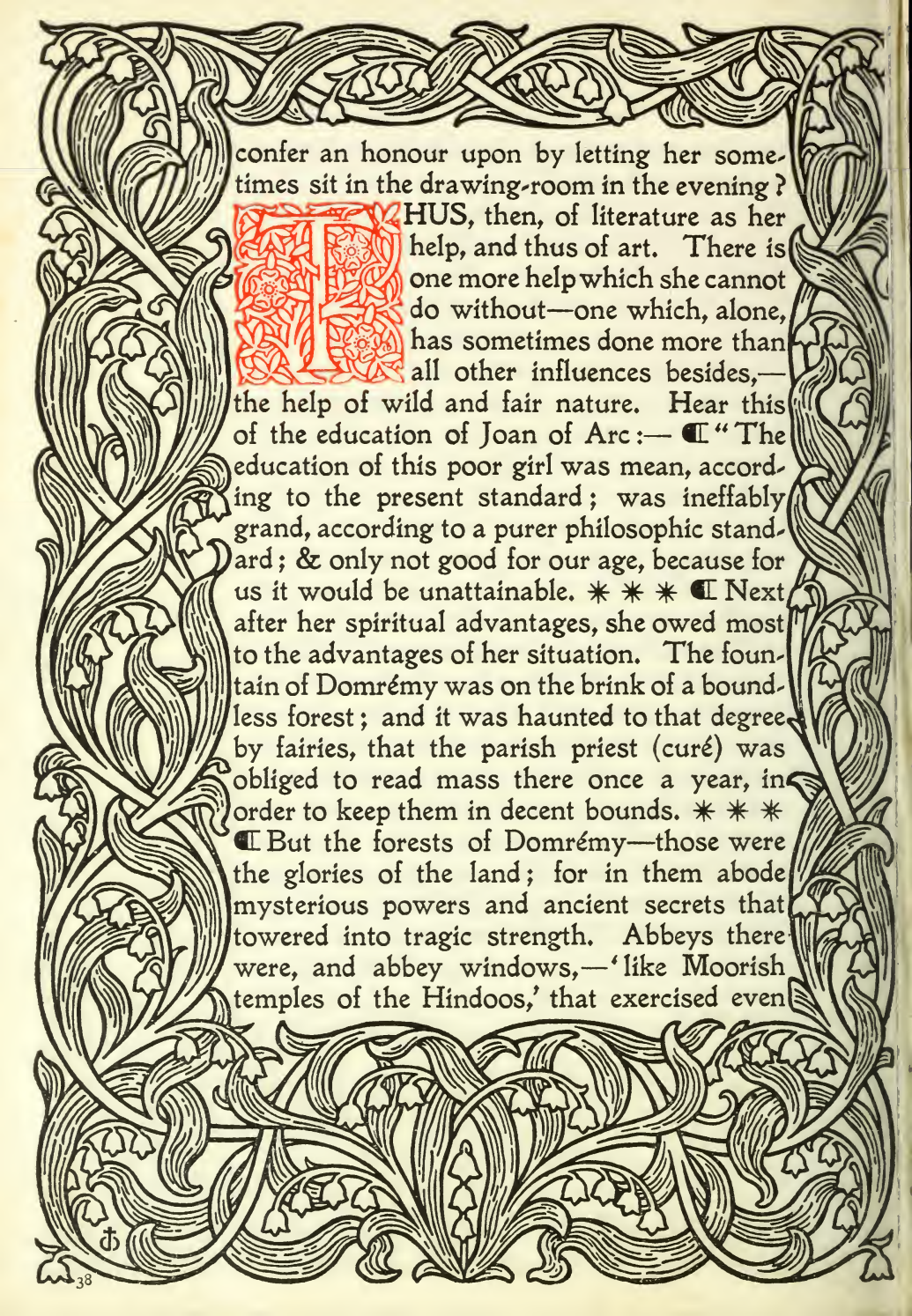
A highly detailed decorative border in a black and white line-art style, featuring intricate floral and foliate motifs that frame the text. The border is composed of repeating patterns of stylized leaves, flowers, and scrolling vines, creating a rich, textured frame around the central text block.

AND not only in the material and in the course, but yet more earnestly in the spirit of it, let a girl's education be as serious as a boy's. You bring up your girls as if they were meant for sideboard ornaments, and then complain of their frivolity. Give them the same advantages that you give their brothers—appeal to the same grand instincts of virtue in them; teach **THEM**, also, that courage and truth are the pillars of their being:—do you think that they would not answer that appeal, brave and true as they are even now, when you know that there is hardly a girls' school in this Christian kingdom where the children's courage or sincerity would be thought of half so much importance as their way of coming in at a door; and when the whole system of society, as respects the mode of establishing them in life, is one rotten plague of cowardice and imposture—cowardice, in not daring to let them live, or love, except as their neighbours choose; and imposture, in bringing, for the purposes of our own pride, the full glow of the world's worst vanity upon a girl's eyes, at the very period when the whole happiness of



her future existence depends upon her remaining undazzled?

AND give them, lastly, not only noble teachings, but noble teachers. You consider somewhat before you send your boy to school, what kind of a man the master is;—whatsoever kind of a man he is, you at least give him full authority over your son, and show some respect to him yourself;—if he comes to dine with you, you do not put him at a side table: you know also that, at college, your child's immediate tutor will be under the direction of some still higher tutor, for whom you have absolute reverence. You do not treat the Dean of Christ Church or the Master of Trinity as your inferiors. ¶ But what teachers do you give your girls, and what reverence do you show to the teachers you have chosen? Is a girl likely to think her own conduct, or her own intellect, of much importance, when you trust the entire formation of her character, moral and intellectual, to a person whom you let your servants treat with less respect than they do your housekeeper (as if the soul of your child were a less charge than jams and groceries), and whom you yourself think you

A highly detailed decorative border in a black and white Art Nouveau style, featuring intricate floral and foliate motifs that frame the text. The border is composed of flowing, symmetrical patterns of leaves and flowers, creating a rich, textured frame around the central text.

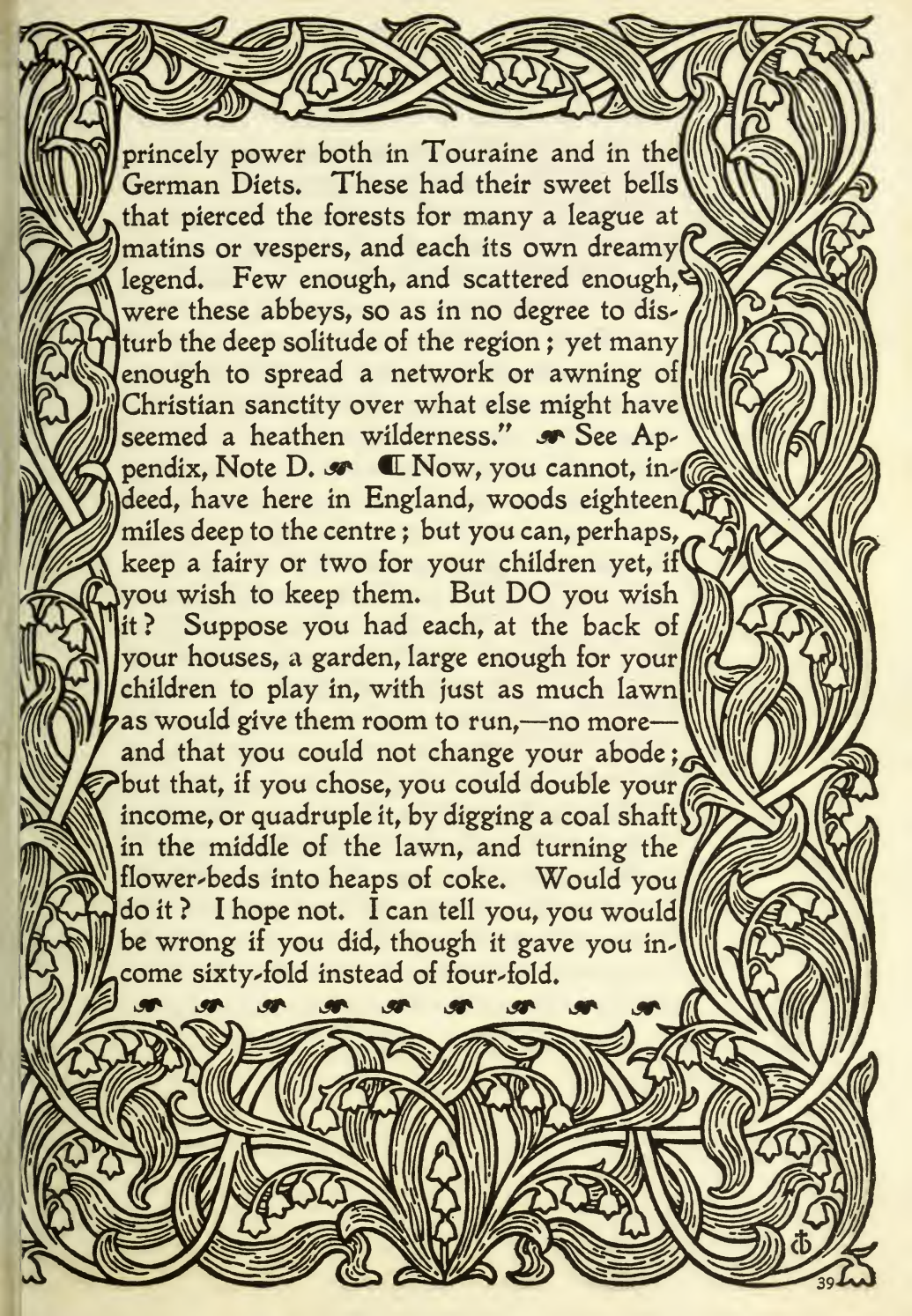
confer an honour upon by letting her sometimes sit in the drawing-room in the evening?

THUS, then, of literature as her help, and thus of art. There is one more help which she cannot do without—one which, alone, has sometimes done more than all other influences besides,—

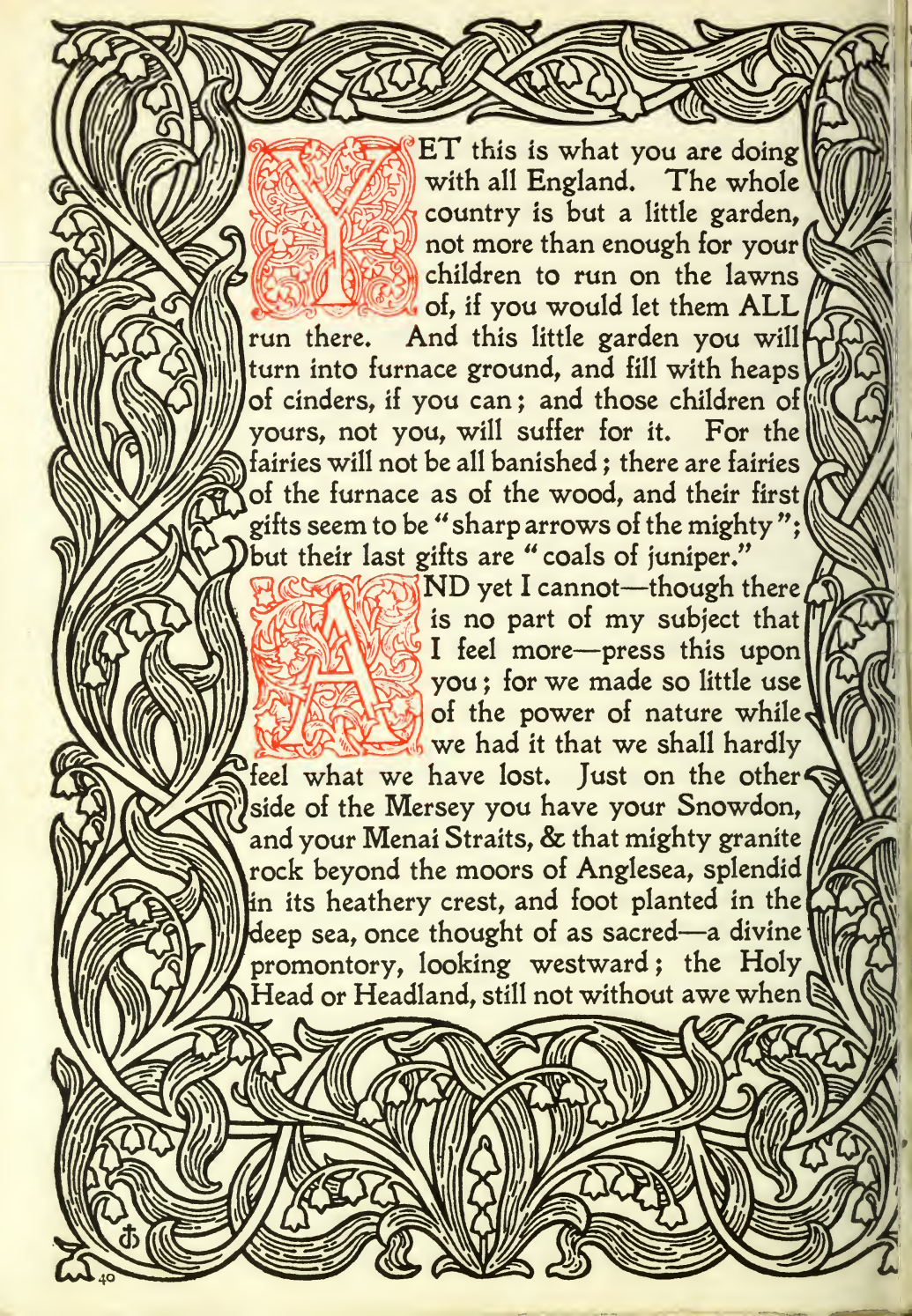
the help of wild and fair nature. Hear this of the education of Joan of Arc:—**¶** “The education of this poor girl was mean, according to the present standard; was ineffably grand, according to a purer philosophic standard; & only not good for our age, because for us it would be unattainable. * * *

¶ Next after her spiritual advantages, she owed most to the advantages of her situation. The fountain of Domrémy was on the brink of a boundless forest; and it was haunted to that degree by fairies, that the parish priest (curé) was obliged to read mass there once a year, in order to keep them in decent bounds. * * *

¶ But the forests of Domrémy—those were the glories of the land; for in them abode mysterious powers and ancient secrets that towered into tragic strength. Abbeys there were, and abbey windows,—‘like Moorish temples of the Hindoos,’ that exercised even

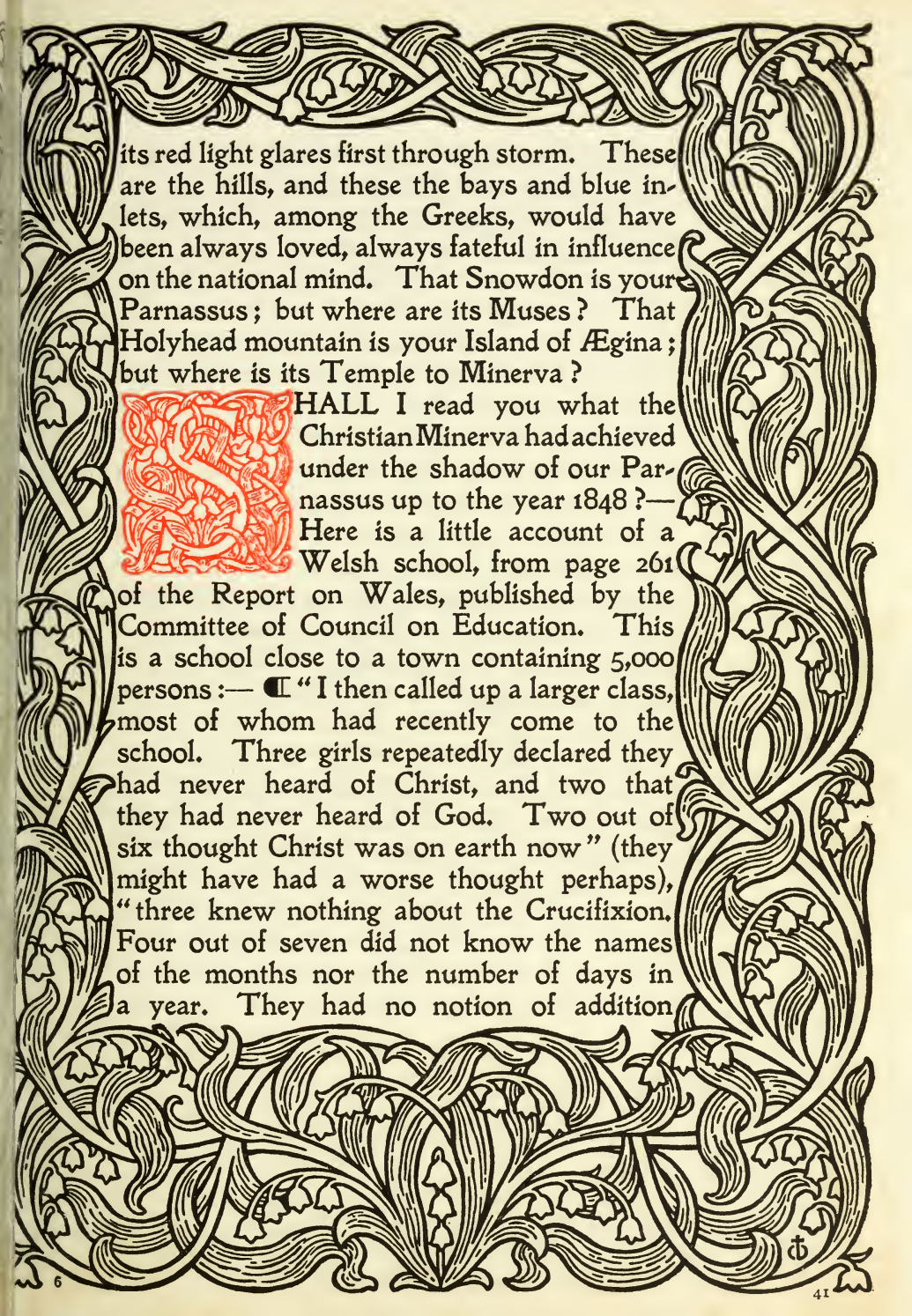


princely power both in Touraine and in the German Diets. These had their sweet bells that pierced the forests for many a league at matins or vespers, and each its own dreamy legend. Few enough, and scattered enough, were these abbeys, so as in no degree to disturb the deep solitude of the region; yet many enough to spread a network or awning of Christian sanctity over what else might have seemed a heathen wilderness." ❁ See Appendix, Note D. ❁ ¶ Now, you cannot, indeed, have here in England, woods eighteen miles deep to the centre; but you can, perhaps, keep a fairy or two for your children yet, if you wish to keep them. But DO you wish it? Suppose you had each, at the back of your houses, a garden, large enough for your children to play in, with just as much lawn as would give them room to run,—no more—and that you could not change your abode; but that, if you chose, you could double your income, or quadruple it, by digging a coal shaft in the middle of the lawn, and turning the flower-beds into heaps of coke. Would you do it? I hope not. I can tell you, you would be wrong if you did, though it gave you income sixty-fold instead of four-fold.


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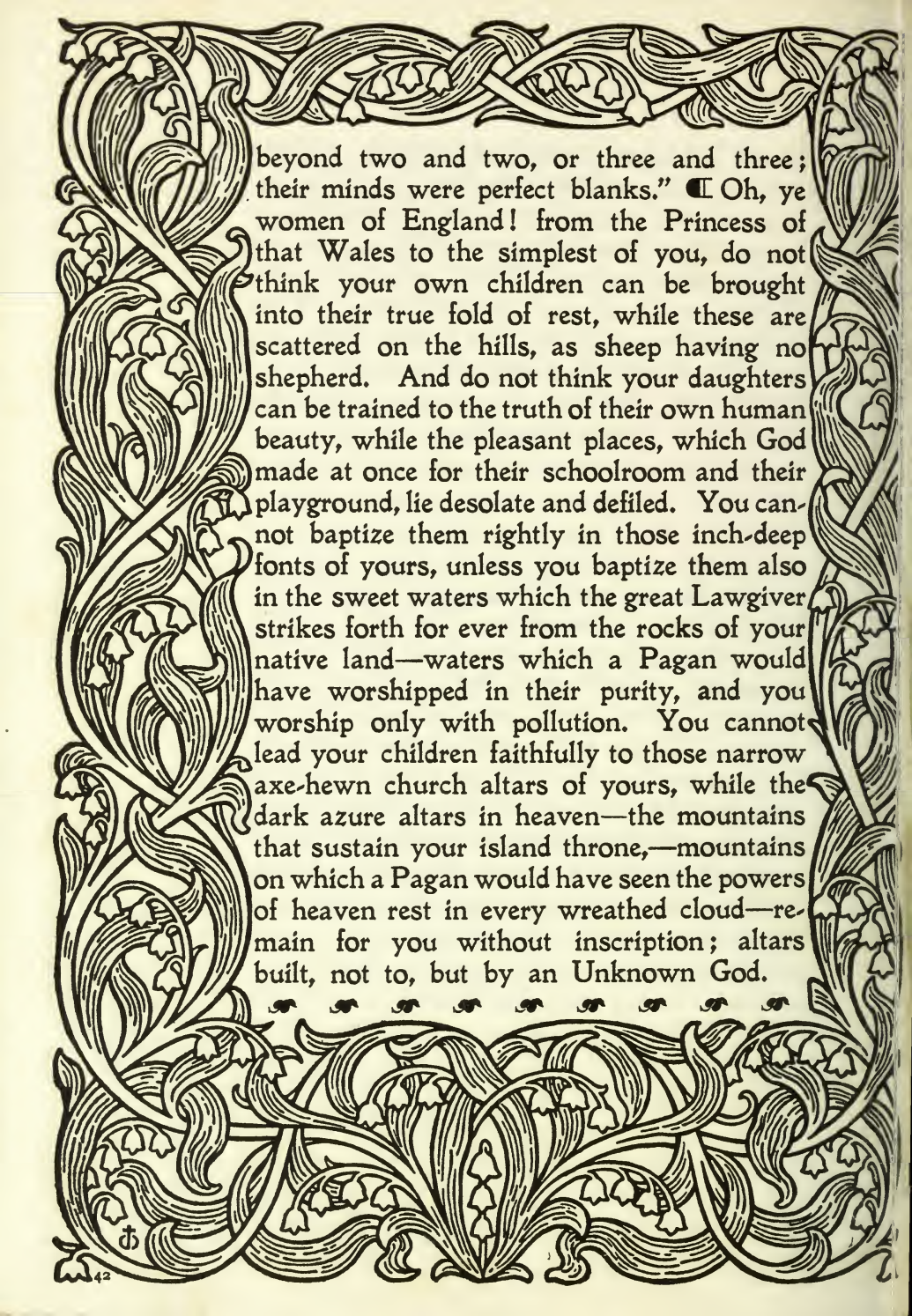
YET this is what you are doing with all England. The whole country is but a little garden, not more than enough for your children to run on the lawns of, if you would let them ALL run there. And this little garden you will turn into furnace ground, and fill with heaps of cinders, if you can; and those children of yours, not you, will suffer for it. For the fairies will not be all banished; there are fairies of the furnace as of the wood, and their first gifts seem to be "sharp arrows of the mighty"; but their last gifts are "coals of juniper."

AND yet I cannot—though there is no part of my subject that I feel more—press this upon you; for we made so little use of the power of nature while we had it that we shall hardly feel what we have lost. Just on the other side of the Mersey you have your Snowdon, and your Menai Straits, & that mighty granite rock beyond the moors of Anglesea, splendid in its heathery crest, and foot planted in the deep sea, once thought of as sacred—a divine promontory, looking westward; the Holy Head or Headland, still not without awe when

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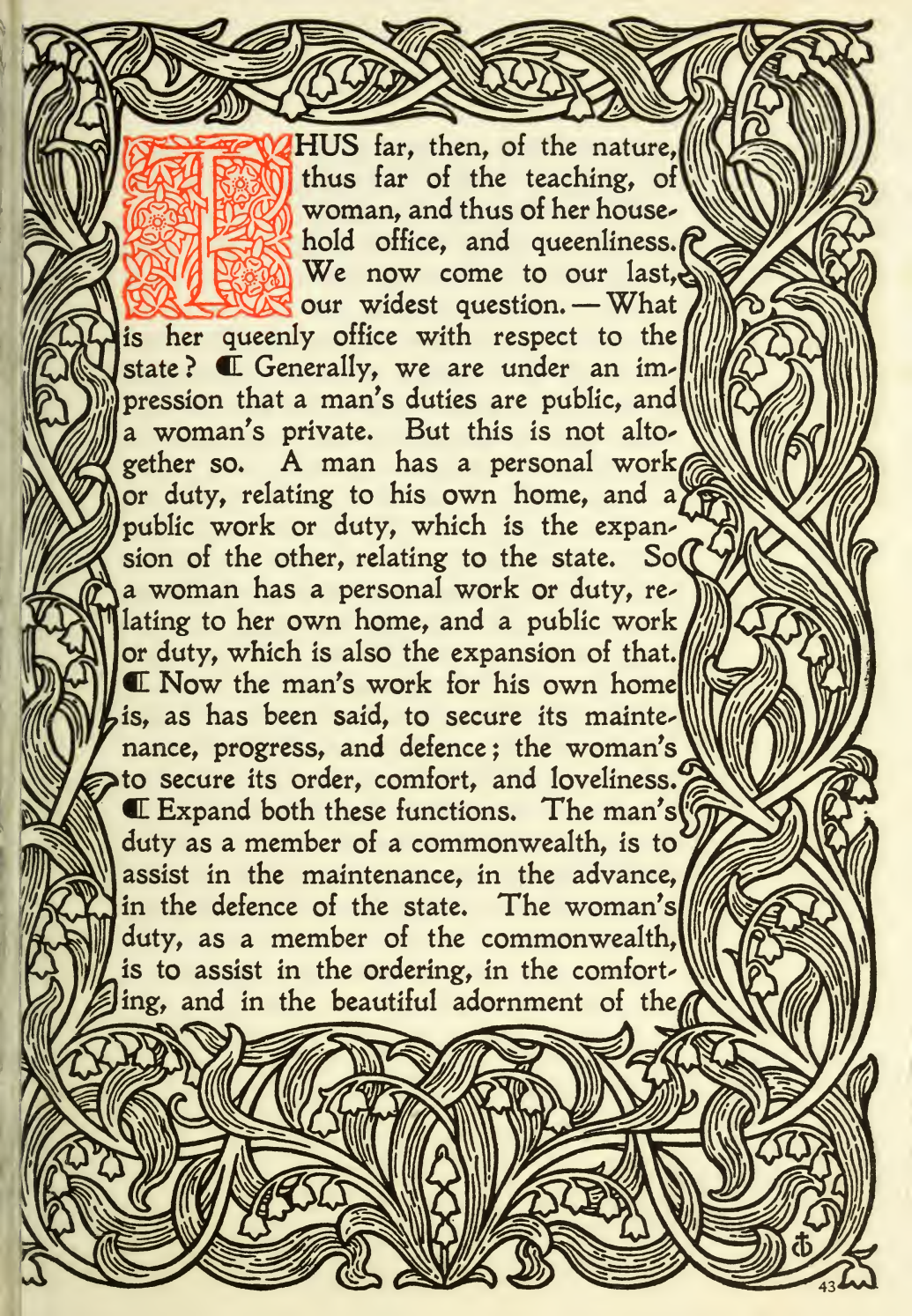
its red light glares first through storm. These are the hills, and these the bays and blue inlets, which, among the Greeks, would have been always loved, always fateful in influence on the national mind. That Snowdon is your Parnassus; but where are its Muses? That Holyhead mountain is your Island of Ægina; but where is its Temple to Minerva?

HALL I read you what the Christian Minerva had achieved under the shadow of our Parnassus up to the year 1848?— Here is a little account of a Welsh school, from page 261 of the Report on Wales, published by the Committee of Council on Education. This is a school close to a town containing 5,000 persons:— ¶ “I then called up a larger class, most of whom had recently come to the school. Three girls repeatedly declared they had never heard of Christ, and two that they had never heard of God. Two out of six thought Christ was on earth now” (they might have had a worse thought perhaps), “three knew nothing about the Crucifixion. Four out of seven did not know the names of the months nor the number of days in a year. They had no notion of addition



beyond two and two, or three and three; their minds were perfect blanks." ¶ Oh, ye women of England! from the Princess of that Wales to the simplest of you, do not think your own children can be brought into their true fold of rest, while these are scattered on the hills, as sheep having no shepherd. And do not think your daughters can be trained to the truth of their own human beauty, while the pleasant places, which God made at once for their schoolroom and their playground, lie desolate and defiled. You cannot baptize them rightly in those inch-deep fountains of yours, unless you baptize them also in the sweet waters which the great Lawgiver strikes forth for ever from the rocks of your native land—waters which a Pagan would have worshipped in their purity, and you worship only with pollution. You cannot lead your children faithfully to those narrow axe-hewn church altars of yours, while the dark azure altars in heaven—the mountains that sustain your island throne,—mountains on which a Pagan would have seen the powers of heaven rest in every wreathed cloud—remain for you without inscription; altars built, not to, but by an Unknown God.

¶

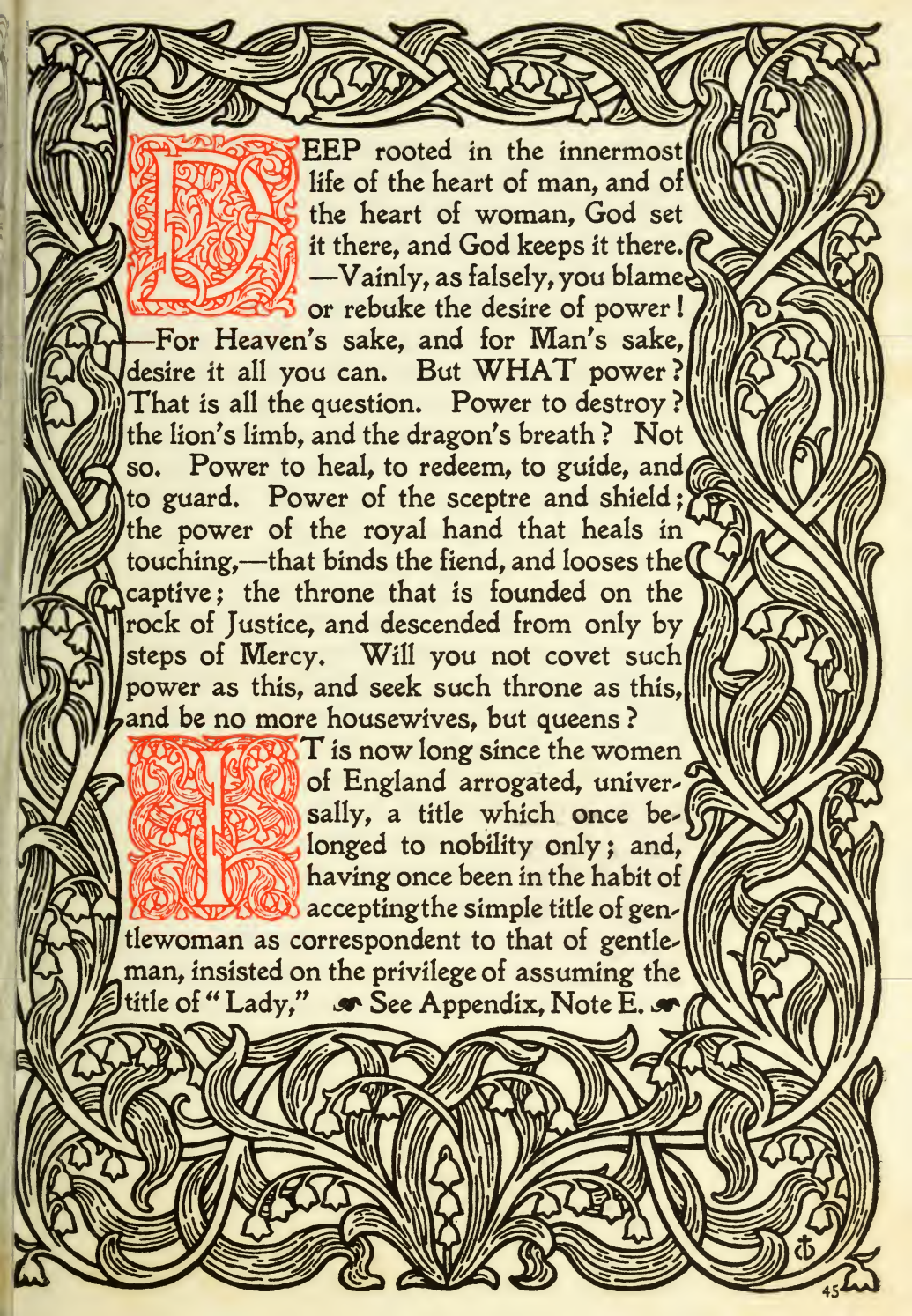


THUS far, then, of the nature, thus far of the teaching, of woman, and thus of her household office, and queenliness. We now come to our last, our widest question. — What

is her queenly office with respect to the state? ¶ Generally, we are under an impression that a man's duties are public, and a woman's private. But this is not altogether so. A man has a personal work or duty, relating to his own home, and a public work or duty, which is the expansion of the other, relating to the state. So a woman has a personal work or duty, relating to her own home, and a public work or duty, which is also the expansion of that.

¶ Now the man's work for his own home is, as has been said, to secure its maintenance, progress, and defence; the woman's to secure its order, comfort, and loveliness.

¶ Expand both these functions. The man's duty as a member of a commonwealth, is to assist in the maintenance, in the advance, in the defence of the state. The woman's duty, as a member of the commonwealth, is to assist in the ordering, in the comforting, and in the beautiful adornment of the

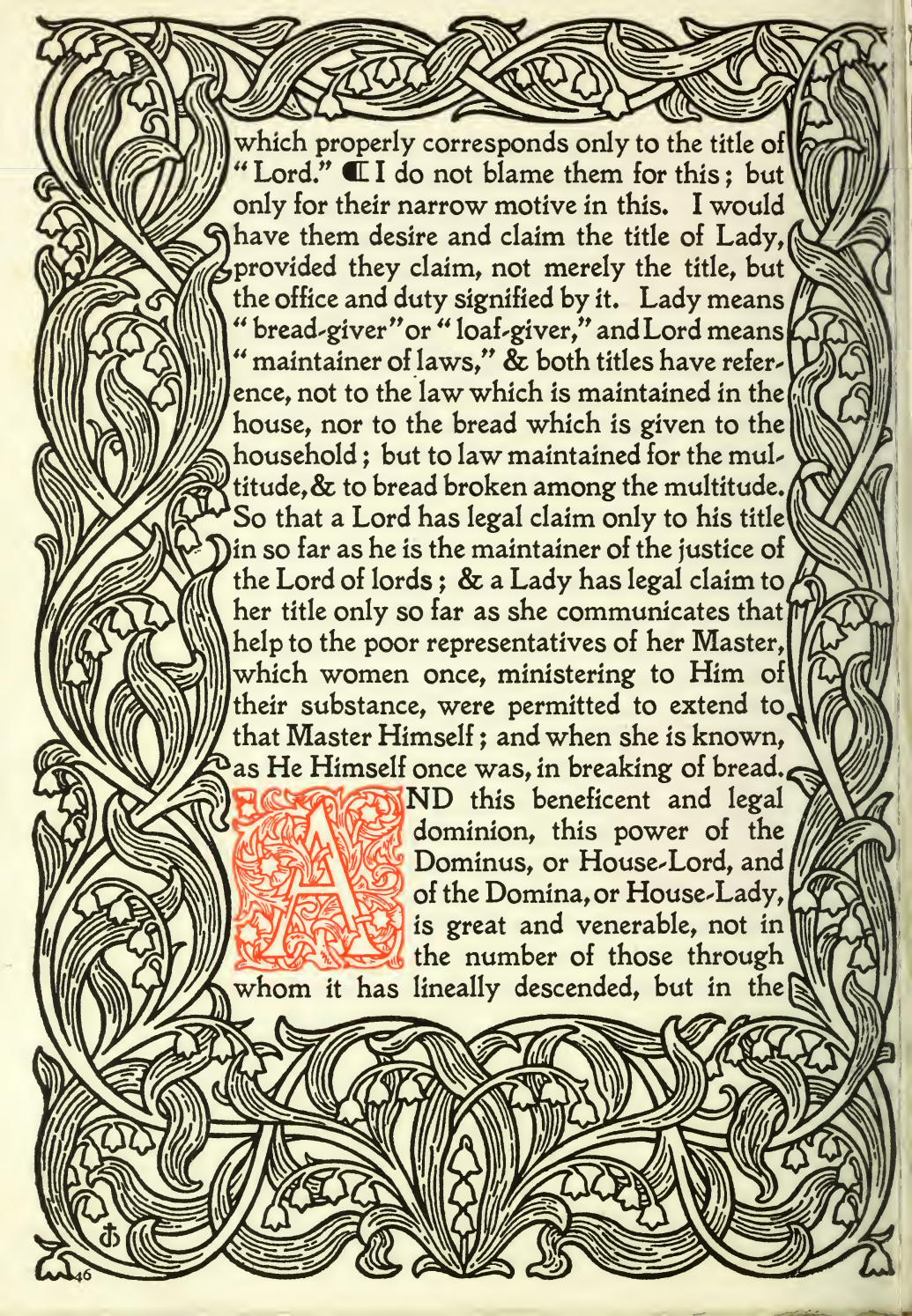


BEET rooted in the innermost life of the heart of man, and of the heart of woman, God set it there, and God keeps it there.

—Vainly, as falsely, you blame or rebuke the desire of power!

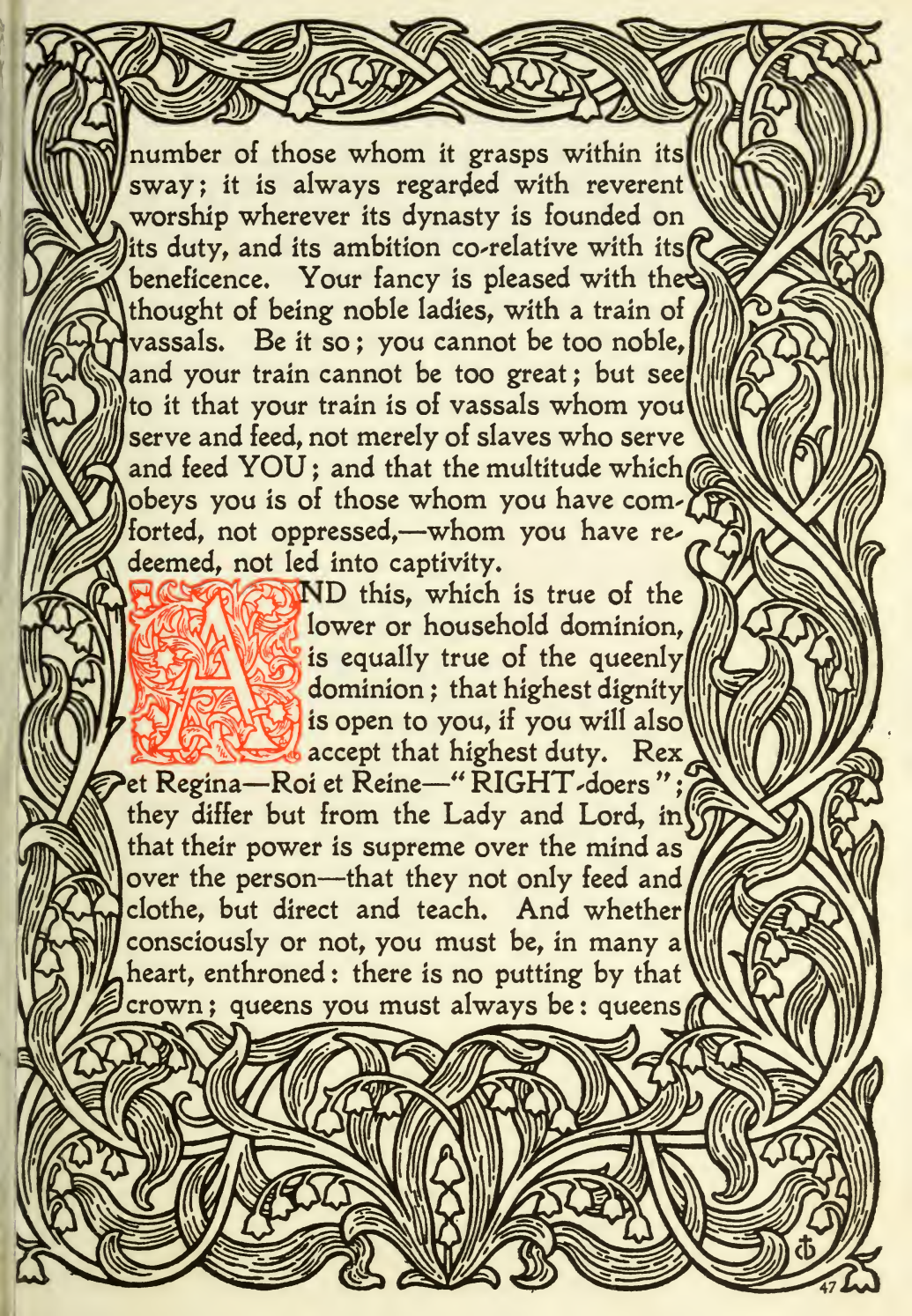
—For Heaven's sake, and for Man's sake, desire it all you can. But **WHAT** power? That is all the question. Power to destroy? the lion's limb, and the dragon's breath? Not so. Power to heal, to redeem, to guide, and to guard. Power of the sceptre and shield; the power of the royal hand that heals in touching,—that binds the fiend, and looses the captive; the throne that is founded on the rock of Justice, and descended from only by steps of Mercy. Will you not covet such power as this, and seek such throne as this, and be no more housewives, but queens?

IT is now long since the women of England arrogated, universally, a title which once belonged to nobility only; and, having once been in the habit of accepting the simple title of gentlewoman as correspondent to that of gentleman, insisted on the privilege of assuming the title of "Lady," See Appendix, Note E.



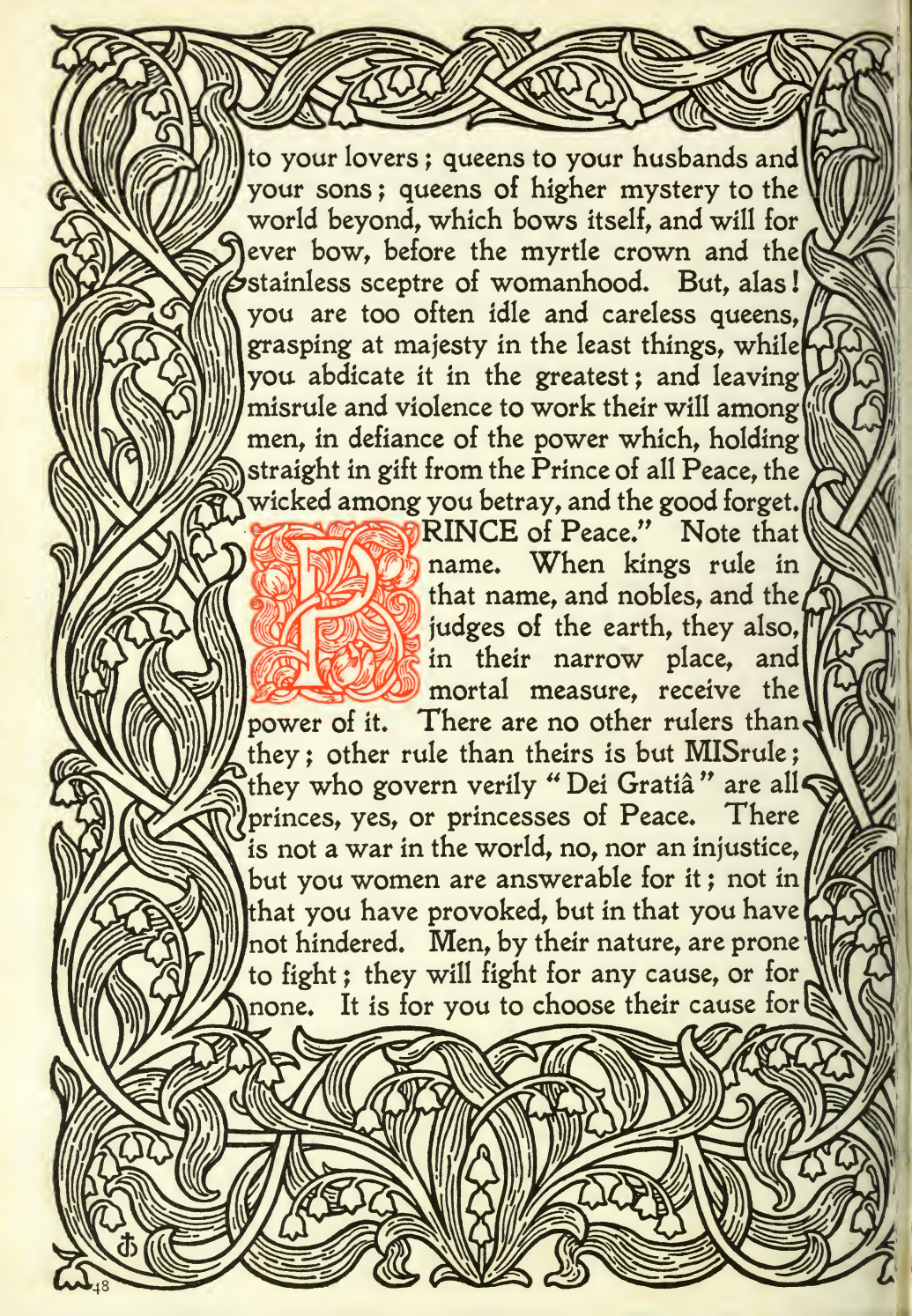
which properly corresponds only to the title of "Lord." ¶ I do not blame them for this; but only for their narrow motive in this. I would have them desire and claim the title of Lady, provided they claim, not merely the title, but the office and duty signified by it. Lady means "bread-giver" or "loaf-giver," and Lord means "maintainer of laws," & both titles have reference, not to the law which is maintained in the house, nor to the bread which is given to the household; but to law maintained for the multitude, & to bread broken among the multitude. So that a Lord has legal claim only to his title in so far as he is the maintainer of the justice of the Lord of lords; & a Lady has legal claim to her title only so far as she communicates that help to the poor representatives of her Master, which women once, ministering to Him of their substance, were permitted to extend to that Master Himself; and when she is known, as He Himself once was, in breaking of bread.

AND this beneficent and legal dominion, this power of the Dominus, or House-Lord, and of the Domina, or House-Lady, is great and venerable, not in the number of those through whom it has lineally descended, but in the



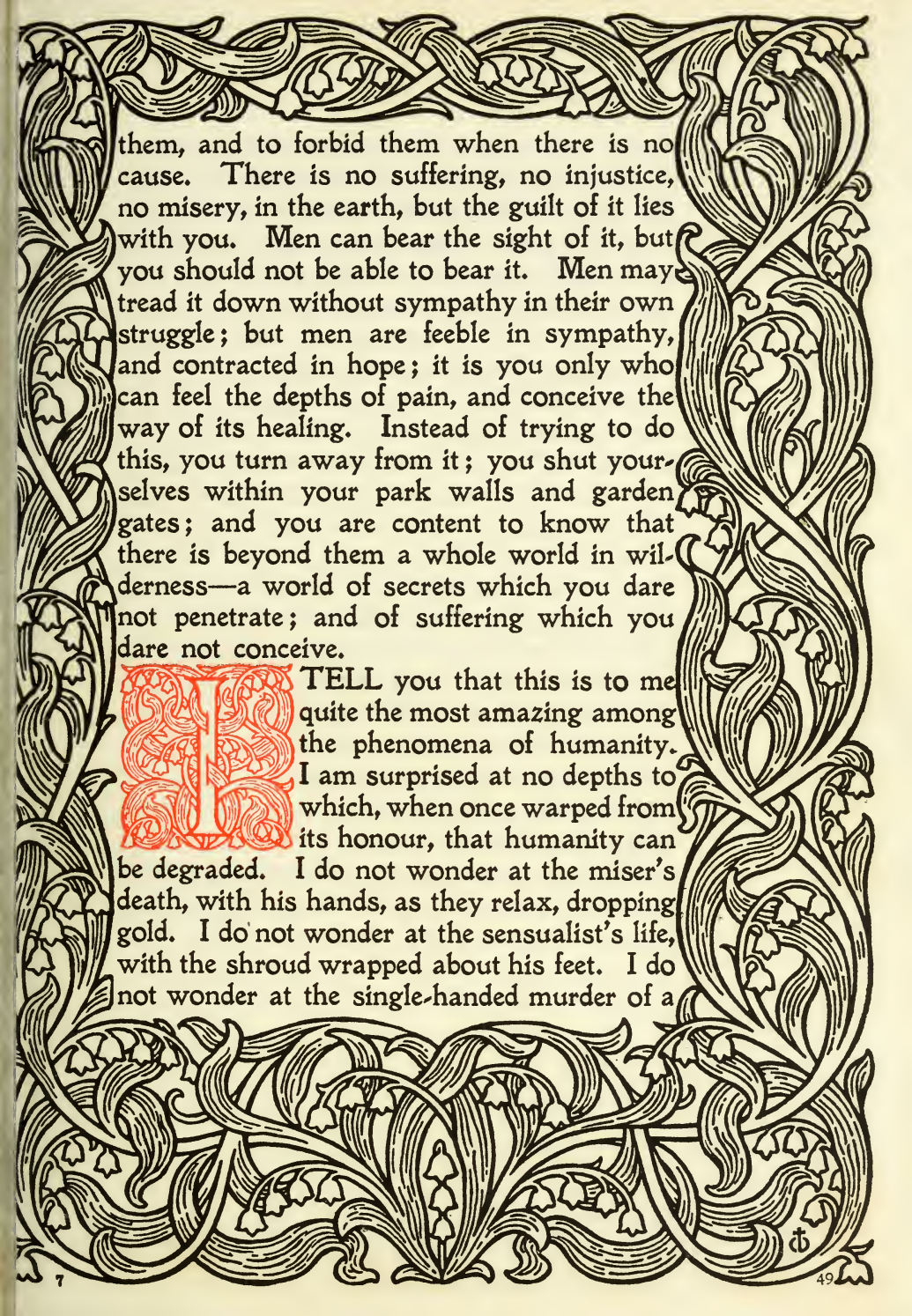
number of those whom it grasps within its sway; it is always regarded with reverent worship wherever its dynasty is founded on its duty, and its ambition co-relative with its beneficence. Your fancy is pleased with the thought of being noble ladies, with a train of vassals. Be it so; you cannot be too noble, and your train cannot be too great; but see to it that your train is of vassals whom you serve and feed, not merely of slaves who serve and feed YOU; and that the multitude which obeys you is of those whom you have comforted, not oppressed,—whom you have redeemed, not led into captivity.

AND this, which is true of the lower or household dominion, is equally true of the queenly dominion; that highest dignity is open to you, if you will also accept that highest duty. Rex et Regina—Roi et Reine—"RIGHT doers"; they differ but from the Lady and Lord, in that their power is supreme over the mind as over the person—that they not only feed and clothe, but direct and teach. And whether consciously or not, you must be, in many a heart, enthroned: there is no putting by that crown; queens you must always be: queens



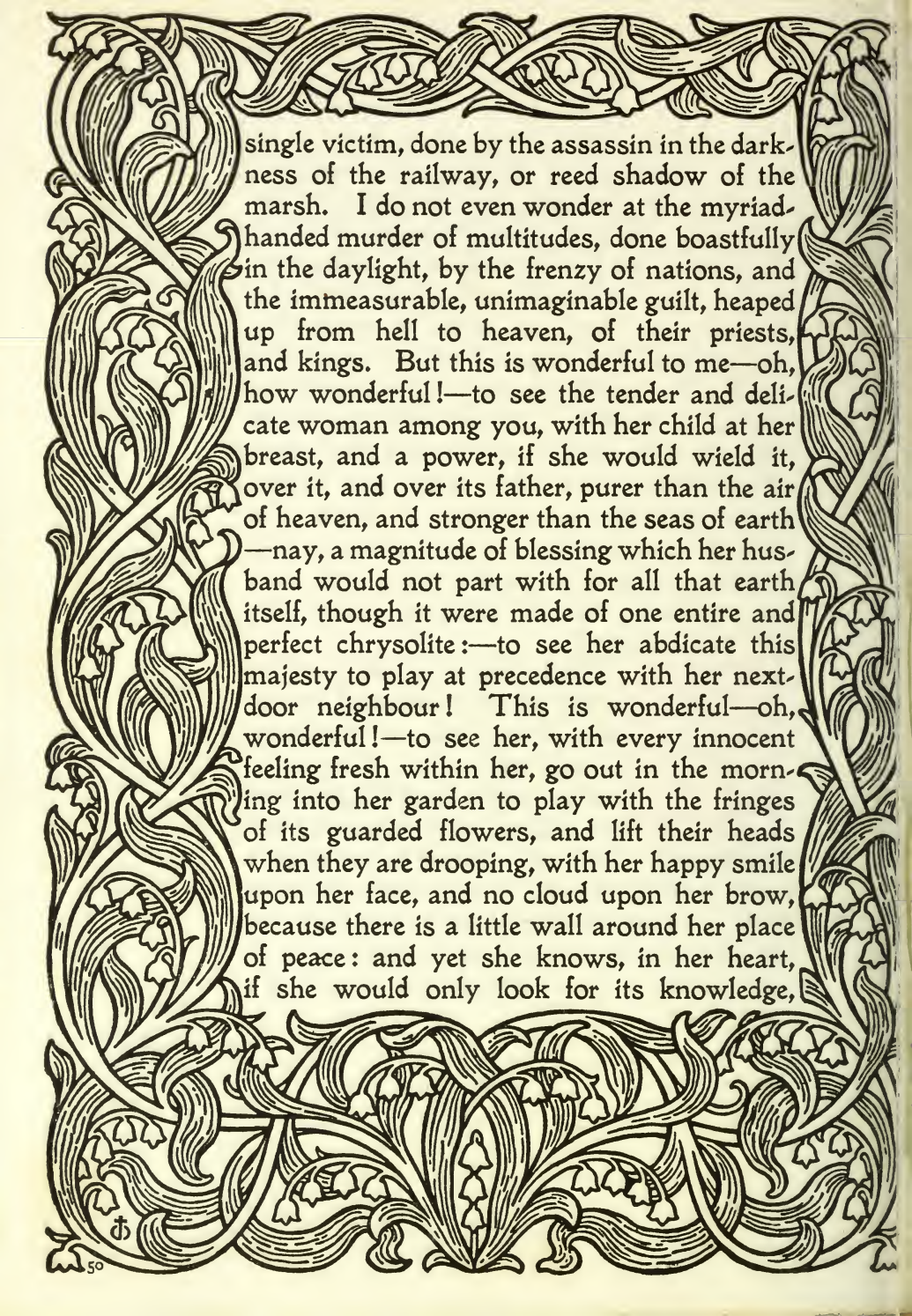
to your lovers ; queens to your husbands and your sons ; queens of higher mystery to the world beyond, which bows itself, and will for ever bow, before the myrtle crown and the stainless sceptre of womanhood. But, alas ! you are too often idle and careless queens, grasping at majesty in the least things, while you abdicate it in the greatest ; and leaving misrule and violence to work their will among men, in defiance of the power which, holding straight in gift from the Prince of all Peace, the wicked among you betray, and the good forget.

PRINCE of Peace." Note that name. When kings rule in that name, and nobles, and the judges of the earth, they also, in their narrow place, and mortal measure, receive the power of it. There are no other rulers than they ; other rule than theirs is but MISrule ; they who govern verily "Dei Gratiâ" are all princes, yes, or princesses of Peace. There is not a war in the world, no, nor an injustice, but you women are answerable for it ; not in that you have provoked, but in that you have not hindered. Men, by their nature, are prone to fight ; they will fight for any cause, or for none. It is for you to choose their cause for

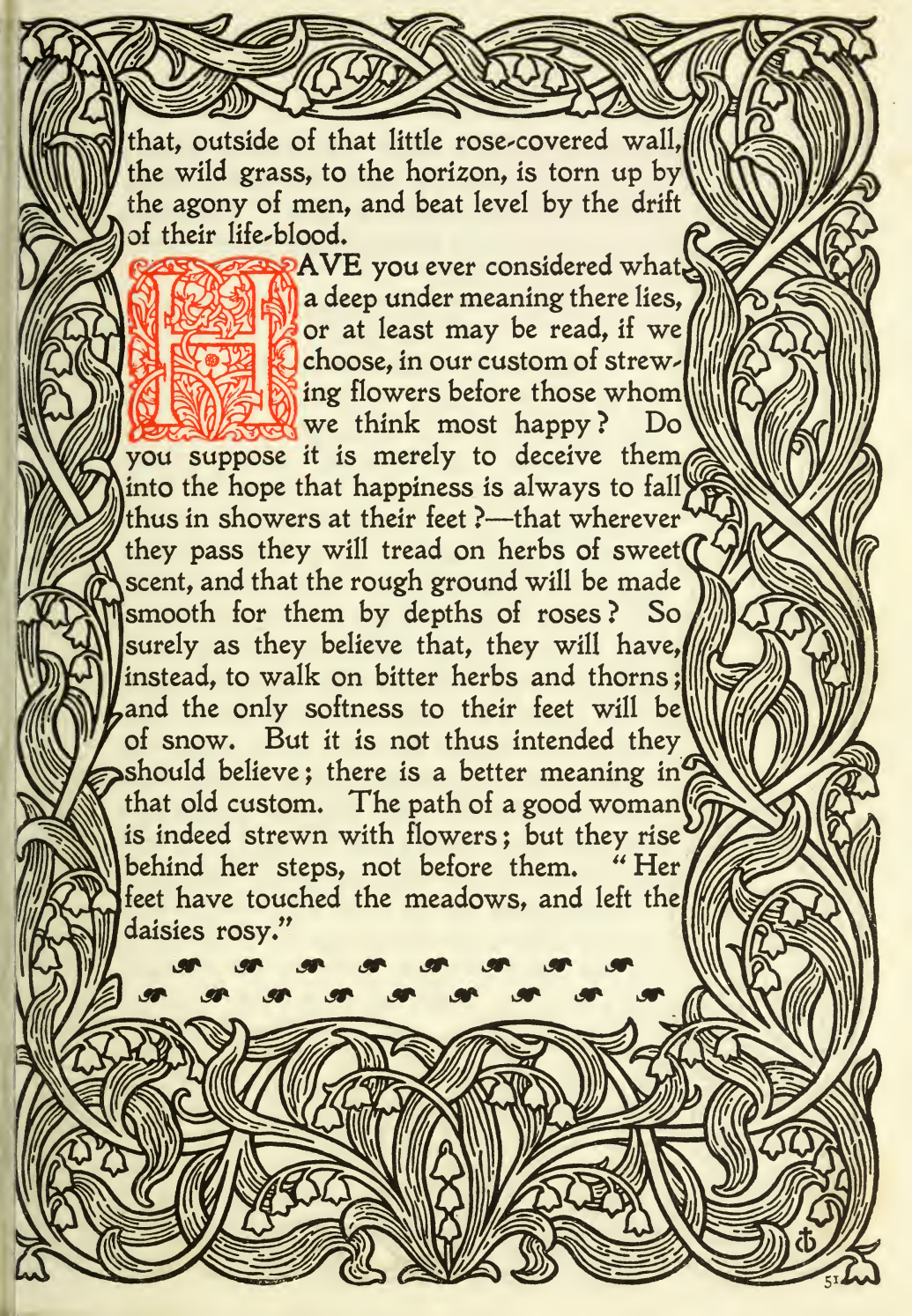
A highly detailed decorative border in a black and white Art Nouveau style, featuring intricate, flowing lines and stylized floral motifs that frame the text.

them, and to forbid them when there is no cause. There is no suffering, no injustice, no misery, in the earth, but the guilt of it lies with you. Men can bear the sight of it, but you should not be able to bear it. Men may tread it down without sympathy in their own struggle; but men are feeble in sympathy, and contracted in hope; it is you only who can feel the depths of pain, and conceive the way of its healing. Instead of trying to do this, you turn away from it; you shut yourselves within your park walls and garden gates; and you are content to know that there is beyond them a whole world in wilderness—a world of secrets which you dare not penetrate; and of suffering which you dare not conceive.

TELL you that this is to me quite the most amazing among the phenomena of humanity. I am surprised at no depths to which, when once warped from its honour, that humanity can be degraded. I do not wonder at the miser's death, with his hands, as they relax, dropping gold. I do not wonder at the sensualist's life, with the shroud wrapped about his feet. I do not wonder at the single-handed murder of a

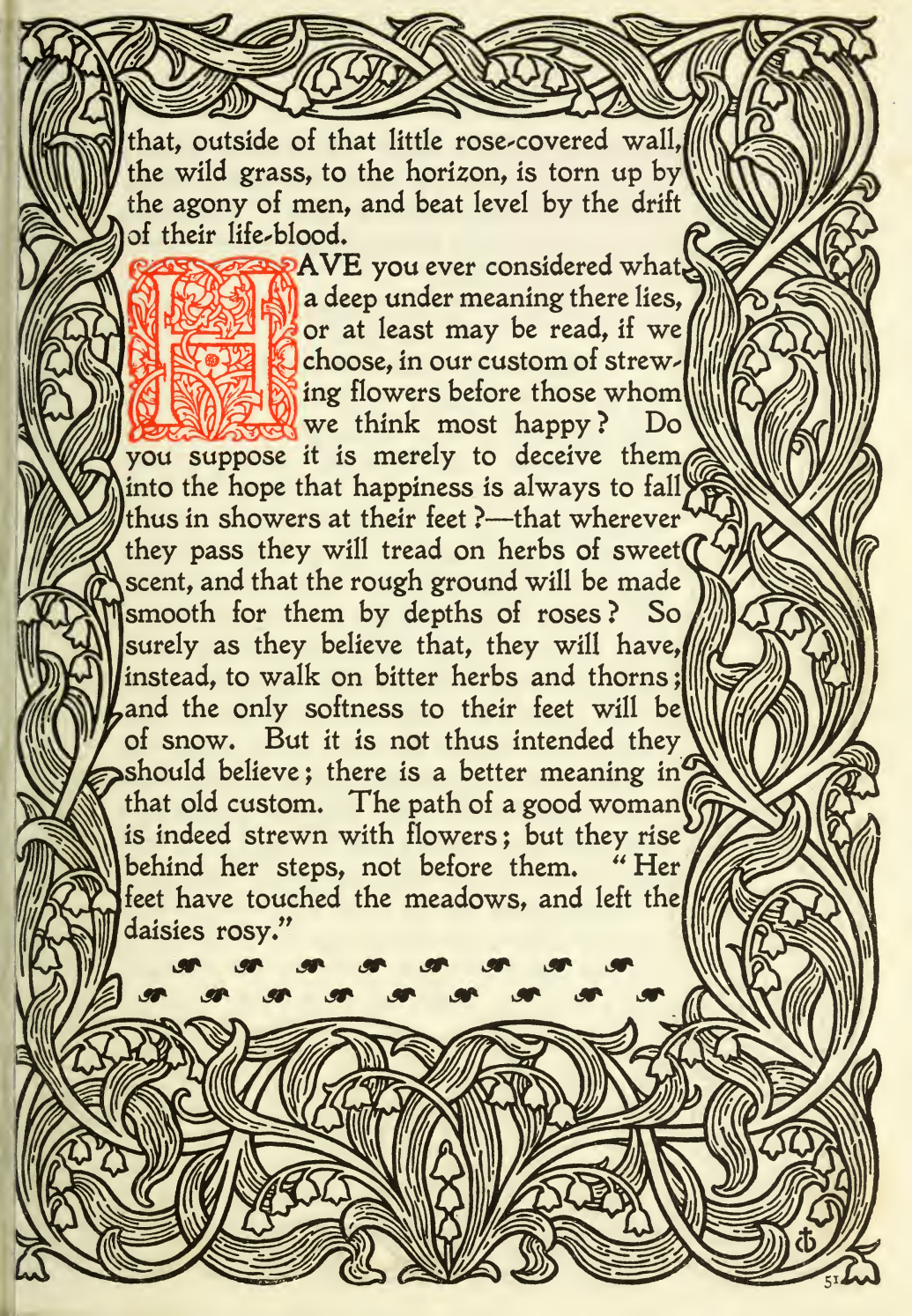


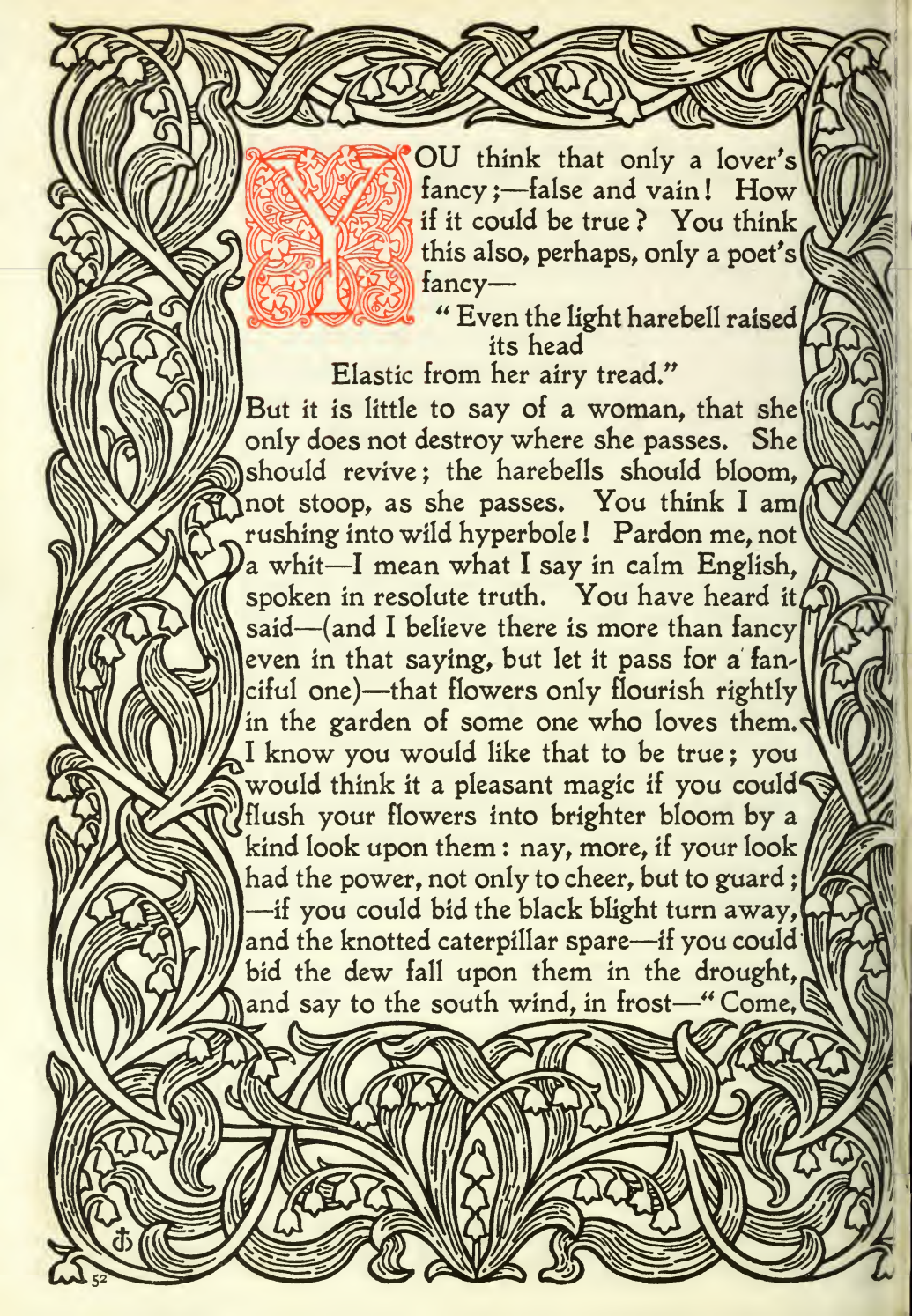
single victim, done by the assassin in the darkness of the railway, or reed shadow of the marsh. I do not even wonder at the myriad-handed murder of multitudes, done boastfully in the daylight, by the frenzy of nations, and the immeasurable, unimaginable guilt, heaped up from hell to heaven, of their priests, and kings. But this is wonderful to me—oh, how wonderful!—to see the tender and delicate woman among you, with her child at her breast, and a power, if she would wield it, over it, and over its father, purer than the air of heaven, and stronger than the seas of earth—nay, a magnitude of blessing which her husband would not part with for all that earth itself, though it were made of one entire and perfect chrysolite:—to see her abdicate this majesty to play at precedence with her next-door neighbour! This is wonderful—oh, wonderful!—to see her, with every innocent feeling fresh within her, go out in the morning into her garden to play with the fringes of its guarded flowers, and lift their heads when they are drooping, with her happy smile upon her face, and no cloud upon her brow, because there is a little wall around her place of peace: and yet she knows, in her heart, if she would only look for its knowledge,

A highly detailed Art Nouveau style decorative border surrounds the text. It features intricate, symmetrical floral and foliate patterns, including stylized leaves, flowers, and scrolling vines. The border is rendered in black ink on a white background.

that, outside of that little rose-covered wall, the wild grass, to the horizon, is torn up by the agony of men, and beat level by the drift of their life-blood.

HAVE you ever considered what a deep under meaning there lies, or at least may be read, if we choose, in our custom of strewing flowers before those whom we think most happy? Do you suppose it is merely to deceive them into the hope that happiness is always to fall thus in showers at their feet?—that wherever they pass they will tread on herbs of sweet scent, and that the rough ground will be made smooth for them by depths of roses? So surely as they believe that, they will have, instead, to walk on bitter herbs and thorns; and the only softness to their feet will be of snow. But it is not thus intended they should believe; there is a better meaning in that old custom. The path of a good woman is indeed strewn with flowers; but they rise behind her steps, not before them. “Her feet have touched the meadows, and left the daisies rosy.”

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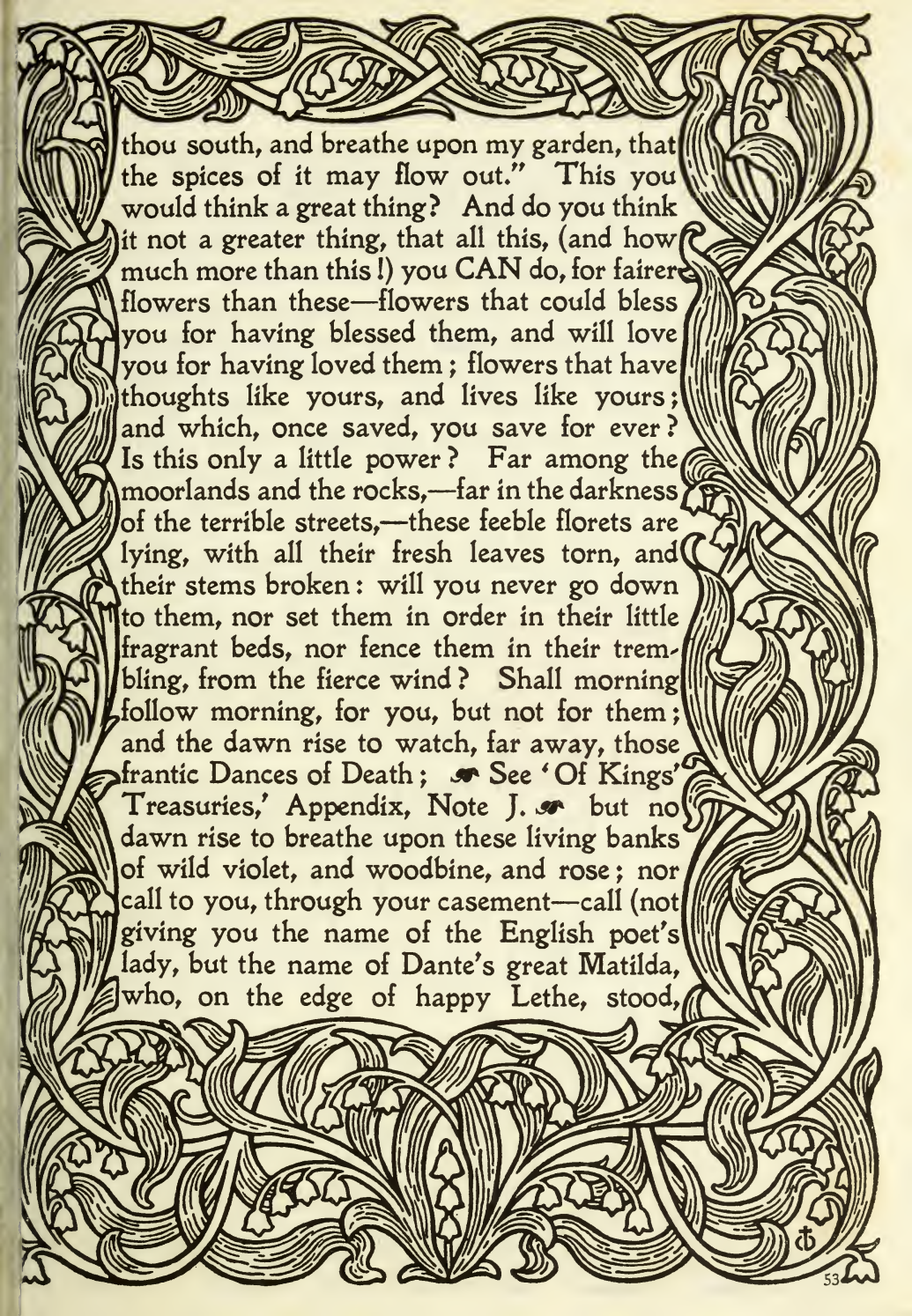


YOU think that only a lover's
fancy;—false and vain! How
if it could be true? You think
this also, perhaps, only a poet's
fancy—

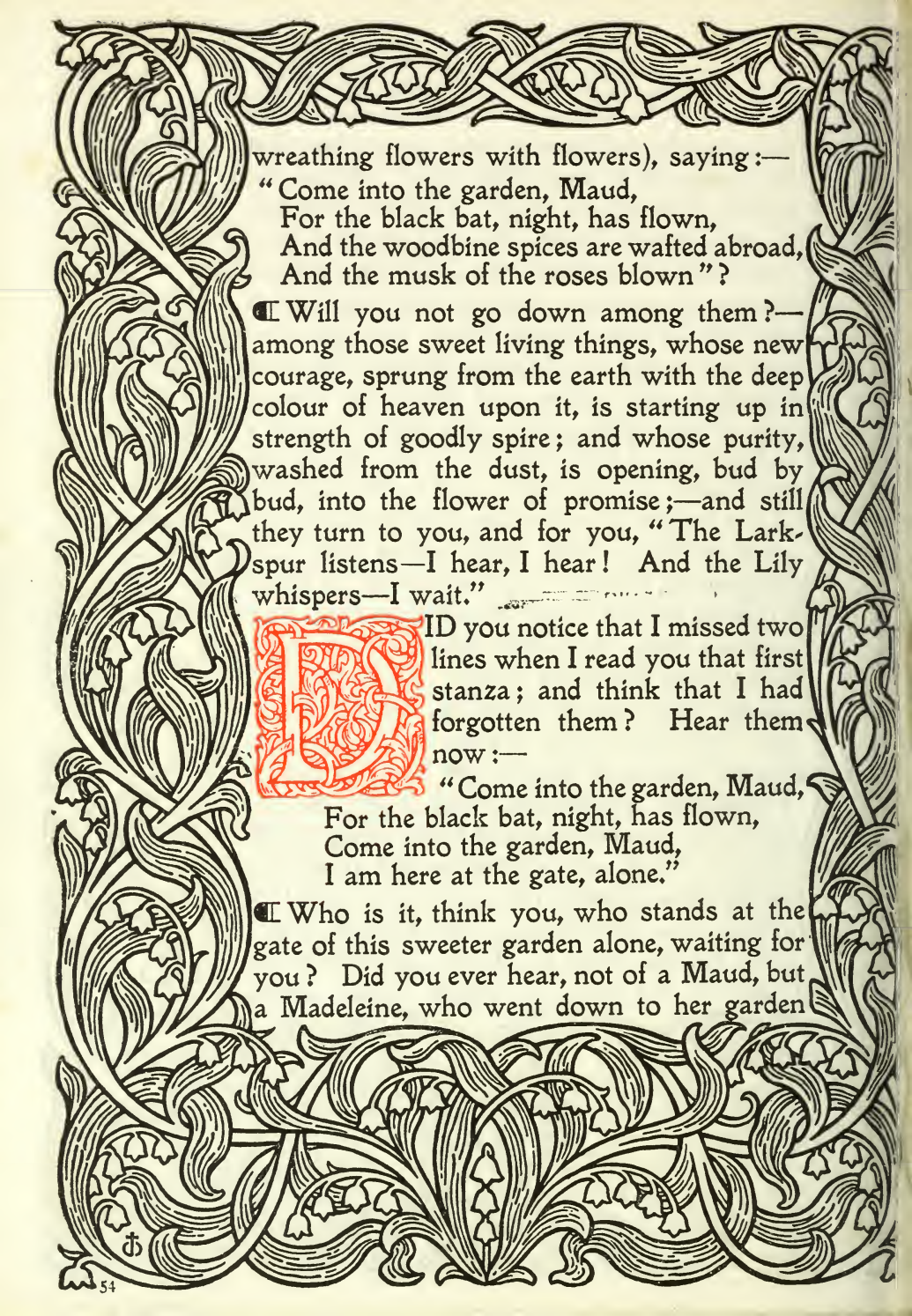
“ Even the light harebell raised
its head

Elastic from her airy tread.”

But it is little to say of a woman, that she only does not destroy where she passes. She should revive; the harebells should bloom, not stoop, as she passes. You think I am rushing into wild hyperbole! Pardon me, not a whit—I mean what I say in calm English, spoken in resolute truth. You have heard it said—(and I believe there is more than fancy even in that saying, but let it pass for a fanciful one)—that flowers only flourish rightly in the garden of some one who loves them. I know you would like that to be true; you would think it a pleasant magic if you could flush your flowers into brighter bloom by a kind look upon them: nay, more, if your look had the power, not only to cheer, but to guard;—if you could bid the black blight turn away, and the knotted caterpillar spare—if you could bid the dew fall upon them in the drought, and say to the south wind, in frost—“ Come,

A highly detailed, black and white decorative border surrounds the text. It features intricate, symmetrical floral and foliate patterns, including stylized leaves, vines, and small flowers, reminiscent of the Arts and Crafts movement. The border is composed of multiple layers of these motifs, creating a rich, textured frame for the central text.

thou south, and breathe upon my garden, that the spices of it may flow out." This you would think a great thing? And do you think it not a greater thing, that all this, (and how much more than this!) you CAN do, for fairer flowers than these—flowers that could bless you for having blessed them, and will love you for having loved them; flowers that have thoughts like yours, and lives like yours; and which, once saved, you save for ever? Is this only a little power? Far among the moorlands and the rocks,—far in the darkness of the terrible streets,—these feeble florets are lying, with all their fresh leaves torn, and their stems broken: will you never go down to them, nor set them in order in their little fragrant beds, nor fence them in their trembling, from the fierce wind? Shall morning follow morning, for you, but not for them; and the dawn rise to watch, far away, those frantic Dances of Death; ♣ See 'Of Kings' Treasuries,' Appendix, Note J. ♣ but no dawn rise to breathe upon these living banks of wild violet, and woodbine, and rose; nor call to you, through your casement—call (not giving you the name of the English poet's lady, but the name of Dante's great Matilda, who, on the edge of happy Lethe, stood,



wreathing flowers with flowers), saying:—

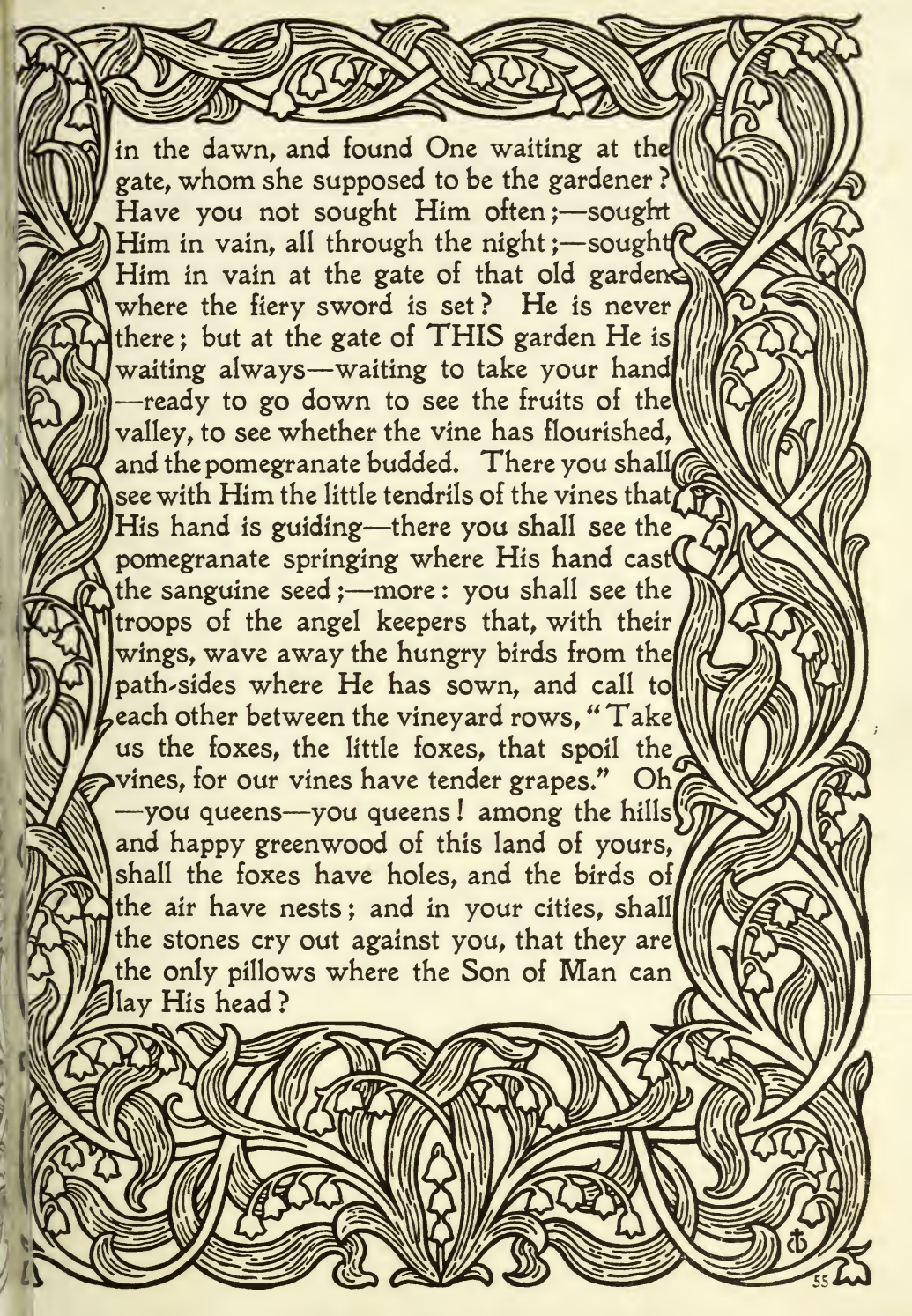
“Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the roses blown”?

¶ Will you not go down among them?—among those sweet living things, whose new courage, sprung from the earth with the deep colour of heaven upon it, is starting up in strength of goodly spire; and whose purity, washed from the dust, is opening, bud by bud, into the flower of promise;—and still they turn to you, and for you, “The Larkspur listens—I hear, I hear! And the Lily whispers—I wait.”

DID you notice that I missed two lines when I read you that first stanza; and think that I had forgotten them? Hear them now:—

“Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate, alone.”

¶ Who is it, think you, who stands at the gate of this sweeter garden alone, waiting for you? Did you ever hear, not of a Maud, but a Madeleine, who went down to her garden



in the dawn, and found One waiting at the gate, whom she supposed to be the gardener? Have you not sought Him often;—sought Him in vain, all through the night;—sought Him in vain at the gate of that old garden where the fiery sword is set? He is never there; but at the gate of THIS garden He is waiting always—waiting to take your hand—ready to go down to see the fruits of the valley, to see whether the vine has flourished, and the pomegranate budded. There you shall see with Him the little tendrils of the vines that His hand is guiding—there you shall see the pomegranate springing where His hand cast the sanguine seed;—more: you shall see the troops of the angel keepers that, with their wings, wave away the hungry birds from the path-sides where He has sown, and call to each other between the vineyard rows, “Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes.” Oh—you queens—you queens! among the hills and happy greenwood of this land of yours, shall the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; and in your cities, shall the stones cry out against you, that they are the only pillows where the Son of Man can lay His head?

APPENDIX

NOTE A, p. 10. I ought, in order to make this assertion fully understood, to have noted the various weaknesses which lower the ideal of other great characters of men in the Waverley novels—the selfishness and narrowness of thought in Redgauntlet, the weak religious enthusiasm in Edward Glendinning, and the like; and I ought to have noticed that there are several quite perfect characters sketched sometimes in the backgrounds; three—let us accept joyously this courtesy to England and her soldiers—are English officers: Colonel Gardiner, Colonel Talbot, and Colonel Mannering.

NOTE B, p. 19. Coventry Patmore. You cannot read him too often or too carefully; as far as I know he is the only living poet who always strengthens and purifies; the others sometimes darken, and nearly always depress and discourage, the imagination they deeply seize.

NOTE C, p. 25. Observe, it is "Nature" who is speaking throughout, and who says, "while she and I together live."

NOTE D, p. 39. "Joan of Arc: in reference to M. Michelet's 'History of France.'" De Quincey's Works. Vol. iii. p. 217.

NOTE E, p. 45. I wish there were a true order of chivalry instituted for our English youth of certain ranks, in which both boy and girl should receive, at a given age, their knighthood and ladyhood by true title; attainable only by certain probation and trial both of character and accomplishment; and

to be forfeited, on conviction, by their peers, of any dishonourable act. Such an institution would be entirely, and with all noble results, possible, in a nation which loved honour. That it would not be possible among us, is not to the discredit of the scheme.



INDEX

INDEX

- Alcestis, character of, 14.
 Andromache, as a conception of womanhood, 14.
 Anglesea, scenery of, 40.
 Antigone, character of, 14.
 Armour, buckled on by women, meaning of, 18.
 Art models, what the finest are, 35.
 Athena, queen of art, literature, and virtue, 15.
 Author, "Queen's Gardens," title of, 3.
 Beauty of body and heart must coexist, 24.
 Bible, the, Moses MYTHICAL, 15.
 „ quoted *passim*, 54, 55.
 „ quoted or referred to:—
 Exodus ii. On women, Moses educated by
 one, 15.
 Ps. cxx. 4. Sharp arrows of the mighty, with
 coals of juniper, 40.
 Song of Sol. ii. 15. Take us the foxes . . . spoil our
 grapes, 55.
 „ „ iv. 16. Come, thou south . . . flow out,
 52-53.
 Isaiah xxxv. 1. Be thou glad, O thirsty desert
 (LXX. version), facing page 1.
 John xx. 15. And she, supposing him to be the
 gardener, 55.
 Acts xvii. 23. Altar to unknown God, 42.
 Books, choice of, for the young, to be by the good in them,
 not the absence of bad, 33-34.
 „ good, to be gone to for advice, 5.
 „ the right use of, 5.
 Cassandra, 14.
 Character, girls', hardened by restraint, 25.

- Chaucer's conception of women, 15.
- Chivalry, suggestion for a modern order of, Appendix,
Note E.
- " the principles of, and women, 17.
- Christ, still "waiting in the garden" for noble women, 55.
- Coals, England made a furnace ground, 40.
- Cowardice, social, 36.
- Dante, on women, 12.
- Dante's Beatrice, 12.
- " Matilda, 53.
- Delight, "vital feelings of" (Wordsworth), 25.
- De Quincey, on Joan of Arc, 38-39.
- Desire of power, 45.
- Dolls, the spiritual, of theological women, 30.
- Duty, instinct for, in the human heart, 44.
- Education, its true end, must be recognized, 1.
- " girls and boys to learn same things in a different
 way, 30-31.
- " nature's influence in, 38 seq.
- " the use of, to help us to consult the wisest men (in
 books), 5.
- " value of, in the kingly power it gives, 1.
- " Council on, Report on Welsh school, 41-42.
- Egyptian wisdom conceived as a woman, 15.
- England, to be garden or furnace ground? 40.
- Gentlewoman, an older title than lady, 45-46.
- Girls, accomplishments of, to be of use to others, 26-27,
35-36.
- " not to be fettered, 25, 34.
- " cannot be hammered into things, as boys can, 34.
- " their education to be serious, 36.
- " intellect ripens quicker than boys', 31.
- Governesses, social position of, 37.
- Greek deity, the greatest, a woman, Athena, 15.

- Greek poets, conception of women, 14.
 Hereditary honour, 46.
 Heroes, Shakespeare has no, 6.
 History, how written, how to be studied, 27-28.
 Holyhead, scenery of, 40.
 Home, its true quality PEACE, 21.
 „ the duties of man and woman in regard to, 43-44.
 Homer, women of, 14.
 „ e.g., Nausicaa, 14.
 Husband and wife, relations of, 19 seq.
 Iphigenia, character of, 14.
 Italian poets, conception of women (passages translated by
 D. G. Rossetti), 12-14.
 Joan of Arc, her education, De Quincey on, 38.
 Kings, how they should rule, doers of right (Rex), 47.
 „ „ „ princes of peace (Dei Gratiâ), 48.
 Kingships, spectral, tyrannous and true, 2.
 „ true, based only on superior moral state, 2.
 Knighthood, modern, suggested, Appendix, Note E.
 Knowledge, accuracy before depth of, 31.
 „ of women and men, 30 seq.
 Lady, and "gentlewoman," titles of, 45-46.
 Laws of nature, their beauty, 27.
 Lord = law-keeper, 46.
 Love, instinct of, 44.
 „ sanctifying power of, 18.
 „ trust and, go together in noble hearts, 18.
 Lovers, the true relation of knight and lady, 17-18.
 Man and woman, different functions of, 20-21.
 „ duty to the state, the expansion of that to home,
 43-44.
 „ has less sympathy and hope than woman, 49.
 „ the world must harden every, 21.
 Marriage, the seal of service, 19-20.

- Menai straits, scenery of the, 40.
- Mersey, the, scenery of, 40.
- Michelet, "History of France," 38, and Appendix, Note D.
- Miser, the, 49.
- Models, the finest art, true, simple, useful, 35.
- Moses, educated by a woman, 15.
- Music, what kind the best is, 35.
- Nature, influence of, in education, 38 seq.
- Novels, choice of, 32, 33.
- " effect of, 33, 34.
- " good, are studies in moral anatomy, 32.
- " not to interest so much as to interfere with the real interest of life, 32.
- Pagan religion, peopled the fair earth with spirits, 42.
- Patmore, Coventry, to be carefully read, his power, Appendix, Note B.
- " " quoted, "Ah! wasteful woman," 19.
- Peace, the Prince of, the title enlarged on, 48.
- Penelope, 14.
- Position in life, education and a, 36.
- Power, our instinctive love of, 44.
- " what, to be coveted, 45.
- Praise, woman's great function, 21.
- Prayer-book, "for all who are desolate and oppressed," 29.
- "Queen's Gardens," title of, referred to, 3.
- Regina means right-doer, 47.
- Rex = right-doer, 47.
- Rossetti, D. G., translation of Italian poetry quoted, 12-14.
- Scenery, value of, by England and Greece, 40-41.
- School, account of a Welsh (1848), 41.
- Scott, Sir W., has only three heroic men, 10.
- " early romances of, 10.
- " merit and truth of, 10.
- " poetry of, 10.

Scott, Sir W., continued :—

- „ women of, noble (Alice Bridgenorth, Alice Lee,
Lilias Redgauntlet, Diana Vernon, Catherine
Seyton, Rose Bradwardine, Ellen Douglas,
Flora MacIvor, Jeanie Deans), 11.
- „ quoted or referred to :—
Edward Glendinning, weakness of, Appendix,
Note A.
Colonel Mannering, Talbot, Gardiner, Appen-
dix, Note A.
Claverhouse, heroic, 10.
Rob Roy, heroic, 10.
Dandie Dinmont, 10.
Redgauntlet, Appendix, Note A.

Sensualist, the, 49.

Shakespeare, catastrophe of his plays, due to a man's fault,
redeemed by a woman's virtue, 7 seq.

- „ has no heroes, only heroines, 6.
- „ view of women, 9.
their dignity, 6 seq.
his good women faultless, 6 seq.
his wicked women, 9.
- „ quoted or referred to :—
Antony and Cleopatra, Antony not a hero, 6.
As You Like It, 6.
„ „ Orlando, not a hero, 6.
Coriolanus, catastrophe of the play, 8.
„ not a hero, 6.
„ Virgilia, Shakespeare's loveliest
heroine, 7.
Cymbeline, catastrophe of, 8.
Goneril, an exception to the ordinary laws of
life, 9.
Hamlet, not a hero, 6.

Shakespeare, quoted or referred to, continued:—

Hamlet, catastrophe of, 9.

„ Ophelia, the only weak woman in Shakespeare, 9.

Henry V., 6.

Julius Cæsar, not a hero, 6.

Lear, his fall due to his bad judgment, 7.

„ Kent, not quite a hero, 6.

Measure for Measure, catastrophe of, 8.

Merchant of Venice, 6.

iii. 2, “ unlessoned girl,” 8.

Midsummer Night’s Dream, Helena, 8.

Much Ado, Beatrice, 8.

„ Hero, 8.

Othello, catastrophe of, 7.

„ not a hero, 6.

„ Emilia, 7.

Romeo and Juliet, 6.

„ catastrophe of, 8.

„ Romeo, not a hero, 6.

Two Gentlemen of Verona, 6.

„ „ Julia, 8.

Winter’s Tale, catastrophe of, 8.

Snowdon, scenery, 40-41.

Society, falsity of, and girls’ education, 36.

Spenser’s noble women, Una and Britomart, 15.

State, duty of man and woman to the, 43.

„ full meaning of the word, 2.

Teachers of the young, their social position, 37.

Tennyson, Maud quoted, “ Come into the garden,” 54.

Thackeray, the lessons taught by, vary with the reader, 33.

Theology, women not to study, 29.

True, the, is harmonious, 5.

Tutors, social position of, 37.

- Vassals, our, to be fed by us, not to feed us, 47.
- Wales, Report on (1848), and school in, 41.
- War, women responsible for, as they could hinder it, 48.
- Wife, should guide her husband, 20.
- „ the true, is a home-maker, 22.
- Women, beauty of, what, 24.
- „ „ and on what depended, 26.
- „ changefulness of noble, 23.
- „ deficient in accuracy and precision? 8-9.
- „ dignity of, according to the great poets, 6 seq.
- „ duties to the state, the expansion of that to their homes, 43.
- „ „ public as well as private, 44.
- „ education of, 23 seq.
- „ „ its end stated, the reading of history, 27 seq.
- „ „ (she is to learn that she may feel and judge, not that she may know), 27 seq.
- „ „ to learn some one science, 27.
- „ „ but not theology, 29.
- „ knowledge of, to be accurate, if not deep, 30 seq.
- „ „ contrasted with that of men, 30 seq.
- „ men and, their relation, 4, 5, 16 seq.
- „ „ women to buckle on men's armour in every sense, 18.
- „ not inferior to men, but different from, 20.
- „ not the slaves of men, 4-5.
- „ and men, their different functions, 20 seq.
- „ obedience to, in noble times, 17.
- „ position of, 4 seq.
- „ praise, their great function, 21.
- „ to be queens, 47 seq.
- „ responsible for the misery of the world, 48-49.

Women, continued:—

- „ rights, and man's, not independent or conflicting, 4.
- „ sympathies of, not to be confined to their homes,
44.
- „ worship and honour of, in all Christian times, 17.

Wordsworth, his exquisite RIGHTNESS, 24.

„ quoted:—

“Three years she grew,” 24.

“A countenance in which did meet,” 26.

Work, right amusement is found in right, 47.

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